A REPLY TO AN ANSWER, Lately Publiſhed to a BOOK Long ſince written by *W. P.* Entituled, *A Brief Examination and State of Liberty Spiritual*, &c.

By Thomas Ellwood.

2 Tim. 3. 13. *Evil men and Seducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving, and being deceived.*

Rom. 16. 17. *Now I beſeech you, Brethren, mark them which cauſe Diviſions and Offenſes, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.*

Printed, and Sold by *T. Sowle*, at the *Crooked-Billet* in *Holloway-Lane*, in *Shoreditch*, 1691.

REPLY

TO THE

ANSWER

[illegible]

BOOK

[illegible] Since written by W. P. [illegible], A Brief [illegible] and [illegible] Ellery Spiritual Sc[illegible]

By Christmas Gilbrooh

[illegible]

[illegible]

Printed, and Sold by T. Sowle, at the Crooked-Lake in Middlesex-Lane, in Sherbrook, 1691.

THE PREFACE.

IN the Year 1681. there was a small Treatise published by a Friend, under the Title of A Brief Examination of Liberty Spiritual, &c. The occasion of writing that Treatise was, a sense the Author thereof had, and an Observation he had made, how much the Nature of that true Spiritual Liberty was misunderstood by some, and the Name thereof abused by others in the Profession of the Truth; who, under pretence of being left to that Liberty in themselves, and to their own Freedom therein, both took liberty to do such things as were inconsistent with that true Liberty, and with the Principle of Truth which they professed; and, despising those useful, good and necessary Helps and Means which the Lord hath provided, and furnished his Church or People with, for the preventing and keeping out such Disorders, Evils and Scandals, as the unruly Nature of man, through such a mistake of true Liberty, might and would bring in, did reject the Counsel, Admonition or Reproof of their Brethren, with a What hast thou to do with me? Leave me to my own Freedom. To reclaim (if it might be) those that were thus deceived, and prevent others from being so, the Author being pressed in Spirit for Zion's sake, and for the Peace of Jerusalem, and having a deep Sense (as himself expresses) of the working of the Enemy of Zion's Peace to rend and divide the Heritage of God, did write the fore-mentioned Treatise for the Establishment of the Faithful, Information of the Simple-hearted, and Reproof of the Arrogant and High-minded; as

his Title Page sets forth. As that Treatise had its Service and Acceptance with the Faithful and Simple-hearted: So it has passed hitherto (for between nine and ten Years) free from the Cavils (at least Publick) of the Arrogant and High-minded, till now that of late some of them, who are of a restless Spirit (and to whom it is uneasie to be, or to let others be quiet) have singled out that Book for a fresh Butt to shoot at, make that a new Occasion to renew Contention, and revive the old Controversie. In order to this they have very lately published a Book, in Answer (as is pretended) to several material Passages in that Book. That Answer hath in the Title Page the Letters J. H. as standing for the Author's Name. But since I have no certain knowledge who is meant by those two Letters, and I find the general stile of the Answer, both in the Preface and Book it self, to run in the first Person Plural [We] which, by the Advertisement at the End of the Preface, I am told may be understood in respect of those of the same mind with the Author of that Book, I chose in my Reply, to entitle the Adverse Party to it, without regard to any particular Person.

They labour much, throughout their Book, to fasten an ugly Imputation or Charge upon the Author of that Treatise they pretend to Answer, of endeavouring to bring in a blind Obedience, an implicit Faith, Conformity before and without Conviction, a Dependence on Men instead of a Dependence on God, endeavouring to obtrude or set up Opinion, or the likeness of Truth, instead of Truth, &c. How far from Truth this Charge is, the following Reply is intended to manifest. How far from true Christianity a man must be that could be guilty of all this, is manifest of it self. The Adversaries therefore, that they might not hereby too much disgust such of their Favourers, as have not wholly cast off all good thoughts of him they thus traduce, make as if they would in Charity excuse the Author from doing those things

things knowingly; pretending to believe him both a better Man, and more a Chriſtian. But how unlike Chriſtians *they have dealt with him, in Anſwering his Book, the following Reply will in part diſcover. Here in their Preface, for the reaſon of his doing the things they ſlanderouſly tax him with, they aſſign his being deceived through the myſterious working of the Enemy; which that it may not ſeem ſtrange, they wiſh their Reader to conſider how many have been deceived thereby, both great and ſmall, and ſome at times hurried into things groſly Evil, as killing their fellow-Creatures, and yet at the ſame time think they did God ſervice. But as no good* Chriſtian *ever did ſo: So, by the Compariſon they have made, they ſufficiently ſhew what a ſort of* Chriſtian *they in reality eſteem him to be.*

Their Preface *is ſo much, both for matter and manner, of the ſame Piece with their Book, that much of what is in the Preface, will be taken notice of in the Reply to the Book; to which therefore, for avoiding needleſs Repetitions, I refer. Yet becauſe they have looſely ſcattered through their Preface many unſound Expreſſions, which perhaps may not ſo fitly be handled in the Reply, I will briefly touch a few of them here; As*

Their calling the likeneſs of Truth a Third thing, beſides what is Evil and Good, and ſaying that it ſtands betwixt Evil and Good (though they bring it in with as [As we may ſay] will not hold weight, but unſound. For that which is only like Truth, but is not Truth, doth not ſtand betwixt Evil and Good, but (whatever it ſeems to be) is really and directly Evil, and ſtands in and with the Evil.

So their making the Covering of the Soul, where the likeneſs of Truth is received for Truth, &c. to be as the Linnen and Wollen-Garment, forbid to be worn under the Law, is an unfit and unſound Compariſon: For neither the Linnen nor the Wollen was Evil, though (as a Type of Sincerity and Single-

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neſs of Heart) *they were then forbidden to be worn in one Garment together; but either the Linnen might lawfully be worn by it ſelf, or the Wollen by it ſelf. But the likeneſs of Truth, that which is only like Truth, but is not Truth, may neither be received together with any thing that is Truth, nor alone by it ſelf without Truth.*

So when they ſpeak of Outward Rules, they ſay, Every adding of outward Rules, ſhews a want of Chriſt's Government by his holy Spirit; *They miſtake. If it ſhews a want of any thing, it ſhews a want of Subjection to his Government by his holy Spirit, not a want of that Government. Neither is Chriſt's Government by his holy Spirit incompatible with outward Rules: but whatever outward Rules Chriſt by his Spirit gives, are conſiſtent with, and agreeable to his Government by his Spirit.*

So again, when they ſay, It is certain that no outward Rule, as it concerns a holy Converſation or the worſhip of God, is of any Service, but until he come: *They err. There are many outward Rules in the Scriptures of Truth, that were given by the Spirit of God, which have been, and are of Service to many, after Chriſt hath been witneſſed come.*

Again, when they ſay, Every latter Appearance of God is as death to the former; *The Expreſſion is unſavoury, and not ſound: For the Appearances of God or Chriſt do not kill one another, but agree one with another, and Co-operate to the work he intends thereby. But when to this they add,* And this is our Caſe, as well as any that did go before us, *&c. They err egregiouſly: For the Appearance of God in us, did not bring Death to the former Appearance of God in others (though to the falſe Appearances and Likeneſſes thereof it did) Neither will any further Appearance of God hereafter, bring Death, or be Death, or be as Death to this Appearance of God, whereby*

whereby God hath made known himſelf in and to his People in this Age.

Again, they ſay, When the Appearance or Converſation muſt be meaſured by certain Rules, it follows what is terms of Communion, or is accepted with God, may not be accepted with men *This is a looſe Expreſſion, and tends to let up Looſeneſs. Are not Sobriety, Temperance, Chaſtity, Modeſty, Honeſty, &c. certain Rules whereby Converſation ought to be meaſured? If there muſt be no certain Rules for meaſuring Converſation, how ſhall the moſt unruly Converſation be blamed, reproved, judged, condemned, and either reformed or rejected? By theſe few Inſtances it may appear, how much they are declined from Truth.*

The God of Truth knows, I have no other End in this Reply than to defend Truth, and the Children of it, againſt the ſlanderous Suggeſtions, falſe Charges, and wicked Inſinuations of the Adverſaries; to lay Open their deceitful Dealing; and to remove (as the Lord ſhall enable me) the ſtumbling-Blocks which they have laid in the way of the Weak, whereby they have cauſed ſome to fall into Miſapprehenſions and hard Thoughts of Friends, without cauſe. And I beſeech the God of Mercy to open the Underſtandings and clear the Sight of all thoſe, whoſe Simplicity has been betrayed by the Others Subtilty, that they may ſee and eſcape the Enemies Snares, and return to the true Fold, from which they have been led aſtray.

THE PREFACE.

A Reply to an Anſwer, lately publiſhed to a Book long ſince written, entituled, *A brief Examination and State of Liberty Spiritual*, &c.

THE Author of that Book, called, *A brief Examination*, &c. hath therein truly and ſoundly defined Spiritual Liberty; declaring it to be two-fold, True & Falſe, according to the true and falſe Spirit, which reſpectively leads into each. The true Spiritual Liberty he defines to be "Deliverance from Sin by the "perfect Law in the Heart, the perfect Law of Liberty, *James* 2. "otherwiſe called, The Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus, "that makes free from the Law of Sin and Death; elſewhere ſtiled "The Law of Truth writ in the Heart, which makes free indeed; "as ſaith Chriſt, *If the Truth make you free, than are you free indeed.* "So that the Liberty of God's People ſtands in the Truth, and "their Communion in it, and in the Perfect Spiritual Law of "Chriſt Jeſus, which delivers and preſerves them from every Evil "Thing that doth or would embondage. In this bleſſed Liberty "it is not the will or wiſdom of man, neither the vain Affections "and Luſts that rule, or give Law to the Soul; for the minds of "all ſuch as are made free by the Truth, are by the Truth con-"ducted in doing and ſuffering through their earthly Pilgrimage. The falſe Liberty he defines to be "A departing from this bleſſed "Spirit of Truth, and a Rebelling againſt this Perfect Law of Li-"berty in the Heart, and being at Liberty to do our own Wills; up-"on which cometh Reproof and Judgment. This, being the Baſis of the work, I thought fit to tranſcribe at large, that the Reader may plainly ſee and underſtand what that Liberty is, both true and falſe, which was the ſubject of that Book, and is now of this Controverſie.

Againſt this Definition of Spiritual Liberty, I do not find the Anſwerers of that Book (for the Anſwer runs in the plural Num-

ber) take any Exception. For, in the entrance of their Anſwer, they ſay, *As to the Definition of Liberty Spiritually explained*, page the firſt, *We agree upon the matter.* But, paſſing by ſome Queſtions and Anſwers in that Book, tending to ſhew, in ſome general Inſtances, wherein and how far the Members of the Church of Chriſt may be left to their freedom; They take hold of a Queſtion and Anſwer in the ſecond and third pages, which are thus expreſt. "*Queſt.* "But doth not Freedom extend further than this; for ſince God "hath given me a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, and "that I have the Gift of God in my ſelf, ſhould I not be left to act "according as I am free and perſwaded in my own mind, in the "things that relate to God, leſt looking upon my ſelf as obliged "by what is revealed unto another, though it be not revealed unto "me, I ſhould be led out of my own meaſure, and act upon ano-"ther's Motion, and ſo offer a blind Sacrifice to God? *Anſw.* "This is true in a ſenſe, that is, if thou art ſuch a one that canſt do "nothing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth, then mayſt thou "ſafely be left to thy freedom in the things of God, and the Reaſon "is plain; Becauſe thy freedom ſtands in the perfect Law of Li-"berty, in the Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus, and in "the Truth, which is Chriſt Jeſus, which makes thee free indeed, "that is, perfectly free from all that is Bad, and perfectly free to "all that is Holy, Juſt, Lovely, Honeſt, Comely and of good Re-"port; But if thou pleadeſt thy Freedom againſt ſuch things, yea, "obſtructeſt and ſlighteſt ſuch good, wholſome and requiſit things, "Thy Freedom is naught, dark, perverſe, out of the Truth, and "againſt the perfect Law of Love and Liberty.

The Queſtion, as ſtated above, the Adverſaries find no fault with, but approve and applaud, often calling it a *Weighty Queſtion.* But for all that, they either miſtake, or wilfully pervert it. For whereas the plain and expreſs Terms of the Queſtion are theſe, "[Since God hath given me a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit "withal, and that I have the Gift of God in my ſelf, ſhould I not be "left, *&c.*] They, in their Sophiſtical Gloſſes upon it, vary the Terms, and inſtead of [God's having given, *&c.*] They render it [*where the Gift of God is received to profit withal*:] And inſtead of [I have the Gift of God in my ſelf] They put [*ſuch as do adhere to it*] As if there were no difference (or They knew, or regarded none) between

betwen God's having *given* a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, and man's having *received* this Gift of God *to profit withal*: Betwixt man's *having* the Gift of God in himſelf, and his *Adhering* (that is, joyning and cleaving cloſe) unto this heavenly Gift. Whereas the Spiritually-minded know, not only that *the manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal*, according to 1 *Cor.* 12. 7. (though too many receive it not, but reject and rebel againſt it) but that, even of thoſe that have profeſſed to have received it, all have not received it to that good end & benefit for which it was given, namely, to profit thereby. Neither have all who have had the Gift of God in themſelves, adhered thereto: But many have wholly kickt againſt it; and ſome who have pretended to adhere to it, have, inſtead thereof, adhered to its and their own Enemy, not to their profit, but to their Loſs and Ruin, and to the Trouble and diſquiet of the Church, of which they held themſelves to be Members.

Now that the Adverſaries have thus wreſted the Queſtion, ſhall appear in their own words; for after they have (without much variation) recited the Queſtion and Anſwer, they in their own Anſwer thereto, pag. 2. ſay, *That this Queſtion above is weighty, is clear, for the whole Controverſie ſeems included in it; For where the Gift of God is* Received *to profit withal, they have liberty and freedom to chuſe or refuſe things, according as they are perſwaded, or they have not; and all this* (ſay they) *is included in the Queſtion.* Here they have put in the word [*received*] thereby turning the ground of the Queſtion from God's having given, to man's having received the Gift of God to profit withal. Again, ſay they, *The Queſtion is, whether freedom and Liberty do not extend further than outward things, that is, Whether it doth not reach to the things of God, where the Gift of God is Received according to the Queſtion*; Whenas the word [*Received*] is not in the Queſtion. Again, taking upon them in a conceited humour, to turn the Queſtion into a Poſition or Aſſertion, they ſay, *It will follow thus, or to this effect, that true Liberty and freedom reacheth to the things of God, to all that have received the Gift of God to profit withal; for ſuch, as they do adhere to it, have liberty and freedom in the fear of God to chuſe*, &c.

Now having thus wreſted the Queſtion, by varying the Terms in which the Author had laid it down, Their next work is to Cavil at his Anſwer; which, though it anſwered his Queſtion, does not

anſwer theirs, at leaſt not to their minds. And firſt I take notice, as if they had a mind to play the Criticks, and ſhew ſome little skill in Pedantry, they fall a Word-pecking, and Carp at his manner of expreſſing himſelf. It ſeems as if they thought him deficient in *Grammer*, and that he underſtood not Congruity of Speech. The beginning of his Anſwer was, *This is true in a ſenſe.* For this they take him up. *It ſeems rather* (ſay they, pag. 2.) *to take the Queſtion to be an Aſſertion, than a Queſtion in our Judgment; for* (ſay they) *it follows thus, That this Queſtion is true in a ſenſe, which to us is neither clear nor very proper, a Queſtion in ſome ſort being a matter undetermined till affirmed or denyed.* Surely, one would think, they might have ſpared their Cenſure on another, unleſs they had learn'd to ſpeak with more clearneſs and better ſenſe themſelves. How would they be underſtood, that a Queſtion *in ſome ſort* is a matter undetermined till affirmed and denyed? Is it undetermined *in ſome ſort*, and determined *in ſome other ſort*, before it be either affirmed or denyed? Or is a Queſtion, with them, a matter determined ſo ſoon as it is affirmed or denyed? They have found out, ſure, an eaſie way of determining Queſtions, if either affirming or denying will determin the matter. But to make this pretended *Solæciſme* upon the Author of the Book they pretend to Anſwer, They abuſe his words: for they ſay, *It follows thus* (meaning, in his Book) *that this Queſtion is true in a ſenſe.* But without Queſtion, They put in the word Queſtion in that place: for it doth not follow ſo in his Book. His Book doth not ſay, This *Queſtion* is true in a ſenſe: But, *This is true in a ſenſe.* This; the Matter, Subſtance, Subject of the Queſtion: not the Queſtion (which is but a form of Speech) but the thing queſtioned; which if They know not how to diſtinguiſh, They are the leſs fit to take upon them to correct Others, him eſpecially.

Next, I obſerve they except againſt the Anſwer as inſufficient. They ſay, pag. 2. *The Anſwer, if worthy of that Name, is ſlight and evaſive, no way deſerving to be reputed or accepted as a true Anſwer to this weighty Queſtion.* Again, *We find no direct Anſwer, neither directly affirming or denying the Queſtion.* Again, *We ſee the Queſtion is rather avoided than anſwered.* All this in one page. And with ſuch abuſive Slights their Book abounds. But in this They do but beat the Air with empty Noiſe and Clamour, roving in Uncertainties and Self-inconſiſtencies. One while they ſay, The Anſwer is *no way* deſerving to be reputed

reputed a *true* Anſwer, as in pag. 2. Another while they confeſs, *It is true* in the ſenſe he grants, pag. 4. Now 'tis not a *full* Anſwer, pag. 4. Anon, 'tis *Nothing to the purpoſe*, p. 6. This befalls them, becauſe They go from the plain and ſimple Truth, from the true Light, to grope in the dark, with their own Gueſſings, Conjectures, Conceivings and Suppoſitions, built upon this [*If*] and t'other [*If*;] from which They as confidently force Concluſions, as if their Suppoſitions were the plaineſt Poſitions; their Conjectures, the cleareſt Demonſtrations. Of this, Inſtances may be ſeen in their 3. and 4. pages, where attempting to find out by their [*If's*] whether the Author's Anſwer be full or nay to the Queſtion, They ſay, *Either this Queſtion, if affirmed, is true in a larger ſenſe, then he has granted, or it's but true in this ſenſe.* If true in a larger ſenſe, it follows (ſay They, but not without another [*If*] though) *If his aim and deſign, as he ſays, was to aſſert the Truth, he has miſſed his mark.* This were to ſuppoſe it impoſſible to hit the mark, if a Queſtion be true in a larger ſenſe than it is anſwered. Which Suppoſition no man of ſenſe, I ſuppoſe, will allow of. So again, a little lower, *If* (ſay they) *I muſt not act as I am perſwaded, then I muſt act as others are perſwaded.* What neceſſity is there for that? Where lies the [muſt] in this caſe? Is there no medium between my not acting as I am perſwaded, and acting as others are perſwaded? What if, in ſuch a Caſe, I ſhould for a while forbear acting, not act at all, but humbly wait upon God, to receive from him the like Perſwaſion that my Brethren have, that ſo I alſo may act with them upon my own perſwaſion? Were there any hurt in this? nay, were not this a good ſign of a right Chriſtian Mind and Spirit? Again, they ſay, pag. 3. *Either he believes his Anſwer is full to the Queſtion, or he believes and knows it is not: If he believes and knows it is not full, then muſt he not only not have aſſerted the Truth as above, but alſo be conſcious wherefore he did it not; and we conceive* (there's another of their Conceptions?) *that muſt either be becauſe he wanted ability, or becauſe he wanted Truth in his way.* Here are a pair of inconcluſive Concluſions together, pieced out with a ſhallow Conceit of their own; which I ſhould not have thought worth taking notice of, but to ſhew the well-meaning Reader, what falſe ways of Reaſoning they work by, to beguile the ſimple. Amongſt whom though ſuch ſort of Reaſoning may paſs for currant, and perhaps be thought of

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ſome force by ſuch as, through yeilding to the Enemies ſuggeſtions againſt the Truth, are become vailed and clouded in their underſtandings: yet to the opened Eye, the ſingle Eye, the inlightned mind, it appears, as indeed it is, empty, ſhallow, trivial, weak and falſe.

Now as to the Anſwer it ſelf, after all their vilifying of it, it will appear to the honeſt-minded to be pertinent, proper and full enough to the Queſtion to which it was given. The Adverſaries, I perceive, expected an Anſwer to conſiſt only in a Yea, or Nay: and they account the Anſwer not direct, becauſe (as they think) it does not directly affirm or deny. But it is their want of skill (if without offence they may be told ſo) that makes them think an Anſwer not direct, unleſs it be expreſt by Yea or Nay. As the Anſwer relates to the Queſtion, ſo the Queſtion related to (as being grounded on) the Definition of ſpiritual Liberty, which the Author had given before. That therefore the Anſwer they except ſo much againſt may appear to be both proper, full and direct enough to the Queſtion, I deſire both the Queſtion it ſelf, and the Definition of that Liberty propounded in it, (and on which it is grounded) may be ſeriouſly and impartially weighed together. The true ſpiritual Liberty, on which the Queſtion was grounded, was defined to be *Deliverance from Sin by the Perfect Law in the Heart, the perfect Law of Liberty*, &c. (as is before ſet down at large.) And this Definition the Adverſaries have ſubſcribed to. The Queſtion that follows, and is grounded upon, this Definition of ſpiritual Liberty or freedom, is this; *Since God hath given me a Manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, and that I have the Gift of God in my ſelf, ſhould I not be left to act according as I am free and perſwaded in my own mind, in the things that relate to God*, &c. Now conſider; ſince it is certain, that this *Gift* of God is *univerſal*, that the Manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to *every* man to profit withal: and yet no leſs certain, that *All* who have this Gift in themſelves, are *not ſubject* to it; that *All* to whom the Manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to profit withal, have *not received* the Gift; nay, that of them who do profeſs to have received it, *All* have *not ſo received it*, as to *profit* therewithal, to be redeemed thereby into the true Spiritual Liberty: Theſe things, I ſay, conſidered, ſuch a poſitive, abſolute, undiſtinguiſhing Anſwer, as the Adverſaries expected and call for, of a

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ſimple granting or denying the Queſtion, by a poſitive Yea or Nay, without diſtinction or explanation, could not in Truth have been given. For that had been to ſay, that *none* ought to be left to their freedom, no, not They, who by receiving the *divine Gift* in themſelves, ſubjecting to it, and growing up in it, are truly thereby brought to the true Freedom indeed, the Freedom that ſtands in Truth, the true Spiritual Liberty: Or that *All* ought to be left to their freedom in the things relating to God, even they who through their alienation from God, know nothing of either this true Libery, or the Gift that leads to it; or They that, profeſſing to know it, and to have received it, live not in ſubjection to it, and ſo are not brought to the true Spiritual Liberty by it; but have a freedom out of the Truth, a freedom to do ſuch things as the Truth condemns. The Author therefore, rightly diſtinguiſhing theſe different ſtates, anſwered aptly to the Terms of his Queſtion; granting the Queſtion in a right ſenſe, but not in a wrong ſenſe. For the Queſtion not opening the particular ſtate of the Party demanding this freedom, but being grounded only upon the Gift or Manifeſtation given (which is applicable not only to all in the Profeſſion of Truth, how diſorderly and ſcandalous ſo ever, but even to all mankind) and not mentioning the Parties having received the Gift in the love of it, cloſed with it to an improvement of it to a profiting therewith, and dwelt in a ſubjection thereunto (which alone brings into the true Spiritual Liberty) therefore the Author, that he might divide his Anſwer aright, ſaid, *If thou art ſuch an one that canſt do nothing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth* (as much as to ſay, If thou art indeed come by thy ſubjection to the Heavenly Gift given thee, into the true Spiritual Liberty, and thy freedom ſtand in that) *then mayſt thou ſafely be left to thy freedom in the things of God, and the Reaſon* (ſaid He) *is plain: Becauſe thy freedom* (the freedom thou wouldſt be left to) *ſtands in the perfect Law of Liberty*, &c. As much as to ſay, thy freedom, if this be thy ſtate, is the true ſpiritual Liberty before defined; and therefore thou mayſt ſafely be left to that, both with reſpect to thy ſelf, and to the Church of Chriſt, which thou art a Member of, ſince that freedom will not lead thee to do any thing againſt the Truth, but all for the Truth. (And herein, it is evident, the Author had direct Relation to that Definition of true Spiritual Liberty which he had given before, and which the Adverſary

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now agree to) But on the other hand, If thou who demandeſt to be left to thy freedom in the things of God, art not come to this true ſpiritual Liberty; but notwithſtanding God hath given thee a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, and that thou profeſſeſt in words to have received this Gift, yet thou haſt not ſo cloſed with, and ſubjected to this divine Gift, as to have profited therewithal, and ſo art not come into this true Spiritual Liberty; but by rebelling againſt the perfect Law of Liberty in thy Heart, thou art gotten into a falſe Liberty, a falſe freedom, a freedom to do ſuch things as are out of Truth; then it is not ſafe, either for thy ſelf, or for the Church of Chriſt (which thou ſeemeſt to joyn with) for thee to be left to this freedom of thine, ſince that will lead thee to act not for the Truth, but againſt the Truth, to bring diſhonour to the Truth, diſturbance to the Church, and deſtruction to thy ſelf. The Author therefore, having granted that ſuch as are come to the true Spiritual Liberty in and by the Truth, ſhould be left to their Freedom in that; added, *But if thou pleadeſt thy freedom againſt ſuch things as are Holy, Juſt, Lovely, Honeſt, Comely, and of good Report, yea, obſtructeſt and ſlighteſt ſuch good, wholſome and requiſit things, thy freedom is naught, dark, perverſe, out of the Truth, and againſt the perfect Law of Love and Liberty.* And thus, to the Spiritually-minded, who conſider the Definition above given of Spiritual Liberty, & take the Queſtion, as it was ſtated by the Author himſelf, I make no doubt but it will appear, that the Anſwer given by him thereto, was plain, proper, direct and full enough.

But the Adverſaries ſhew what they would be at: for they ſay, p. 4. *The Queſtion affirmed as above, is certainly not only true in a part, or in a ſenſe, as he is pleaſed to ſay, but it is true in every part, true in the whole and every ſenſe that a Poſition can be true in; Nay, it is ſo far true, that if it can be wrong at all, 'tis only in a ſenſe, and that is only when miſapplied.* Reply. Theſe few Lines yield much matter to be conſidered; 1ſt. When they ſay the Queſtion affirmed as above, they muſt mean the Queſtion, as it lies in the Author's own Terms and Book, or as they have new modelled it, formed, transformed and deformed it, perverted and wreſted it to their own ſenſe in their Book. If they mean the latter, they prevaricate foully. If they intend the former, *viz.* That the Queſtion, as ſtated and laid down (or, to anſwer their conceit affirmed) in the Author's own Terms, is true

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(that is, is to be granted, or held in the affirmative) *in every* part, in the *whole*, and in *every ſenſe* that a Poſition can be true in: then, ſince the Queſtion aſſigns no other Qualification to the Party demanding to be left to act according to his freedom, but that which is common to the moſt ſcandalous Profeſſor, to the vileſt Apoſtate, yea, to all mankind, namely, that God hath given him a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, and that he hath the Gift of God in himſelf (which many that have it, rebel againſt, and are ſo far from profiting with it, that they do deſpight unto it, it will follow, according to the Adverſaries ſenſe, that All ſuch as God hath given a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, All ſuch as have the Gift of God in themſelves, how diſobedient ſoever they are to it, how Heady and High-minded ſoever, how unruly and turbulent ſoever, how factious and quarrelſom ſoever in the Church, muſt notwithſtanding be left to act as they are free (though they are free to act what is out of Truth) and the Church be obliged to own and receive them as Brethren and fellow-Members in their ſo acting. But though this be the Conſequence of the Adverſaries Arguing, yet it is directly contrary to the Apoſtle's counſel, *Rom.* 16. 17. & 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. Secondly, when They ſay, The Queſtion is true *in every part*, true in *the whole*, and *every ſenſe* that a Poſition can be true in; And then add, It is ſo far true, that *If it can be wrong at all, 'tis only in a ſenſe*: They ſeem to me to run at once into an Uncertainty and a Contradiction. A Contradiction, in admitting it capable of being wrong in *any ſenſe*, after they have ſo poſitively affirmed it to be true in *every ſenſe*. An Uncertainty, in ſaying, *If* it can be wrong at all; which ſhews They hæſitate, They doubt, They are not well aſſured, They are but in the Uncertainty: And themſelves ſay in the ſame page, but a few lines lower, *An Uncertainty admitted for the Truth in this caſe, ſtands in the nature of a Lye.* To this they add another Paradox; for having ſaid, If the Queſtion be wrong at all, 'tis only in a ſenſe, and that is only when miſapplied; They add, *But the miſapplication of this weighty Queſtion when affirmed, doth neither deſtroy it in its ſelf, nor in the leaſt take away the true uſe.* This, in a Parentheſis, They bid us *Obſerve*. And truly they muſt be *obſervant* Readers indeed, that can *obſerve* any Congruity of Senſe or Reaſon in this Paſſage; or underſtand how that can be *miſapplied to any one*, which (according to their ſenſe) is *applicable to every one*.

But it is very probable, that what They here ſay of this weighty Queſtion, as they ſo often call it, is intended rather of the Queſtion, or Poſition they have made (for they have turn'd it from one to to'ther) than of the Queſtion propounded by that Author: for they here immediately ſubjoyn their Creed, as if they deduced it from the Queſtion; but in ſuch Terms as are only in their own Queſtion, not in his. Thus they word it. *Therefore we believe, where the Gift of God is received to profit withal, and truly adhered to, there muſt be a Liberty to chuſe and refuſe things, according as ſuch are perſwaded, even from the Babe in Chriſt, to the Strong Man, and ſo to all ſtates*: (in Chriſt I ſuppoſe they mean.) This ſhews how little they underſtand the Queſtion, and the ground of it. For the Babe in Chriſt, *he that is truly in Chriſt*, though but in a Babiſh ſtate, *abiding in him*, can do nothing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth; though he may not be able to do ſo much for the Truth, as a Strong Man, or Father in Chriſt can do. He that hath ſo received the Gift of God, as to profit therewithal, and doth truly adhere thereunto, be his meaſure of growth or ſtature therein what it will, yet, abiding and growing up therein, That will lead him to chuſe, and with freedom to embrace, whatſoever is Holy, Juſt, Lovely, Honeſt, Comely, and of good Report. So that ſuch an one in that Capacity, wherein (according to the Author's Anſwer to the Queſtion, concerning being left to act as he is free, *&c.*) he may ſafely be left to his freedom in the things of God. Thus, after all their Clamour againſt the Anſwer to the Queſtion, as no way deſerving to be reputed a true Anſwer, not worthy of that name, of no uſe or ſervice with reſpect to the Controverſie, worth nothing, nothing to the purpoſe, *&c.* becauſe not large enough, not comprehenſive enough (as they think) to take in All; They, with all their ſtretching and wreſting, have brought it but to the ſame paſs, to them only that are in Chriſt. And they tell us, pag. 7. That *Man muſt be made a New Creature, and muſt travel through the whole Myſtery of Iniquity, before he can come into Chriſt*; and that, *though the Enemy, that fallen Angel, can go with Man into every Remove, while man is fitting and preparing, yet into Chriſt he cannot come.* So that, with them, a man being come to be in Chriſt, is out of the Enemies reach. Thus, (though, exerciſing themſelves in things too high for them, They utter what they underſtand not,) yet they bring the matter to the

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ſame Iſſue and reſult, that the Author's own Anſwer left it in. For they that are thus come through the Travel, beyond the fitting and preparing, beyond the whole Myſtery of Iniquity, into Chriſt, and out of the Enemy's reach, being entred where he cannot come: Theſe are ſure in as high an Eſtate as thoſe can be, who the Author ſaid may ſafely be left to their freedom in the things of God. The difference then lies not between ſuch as are in different growths in Chriſt; but between Thoſe that are really in him, and Thoſe that are not in him, though they may profeſs to believe in him. The danger is not of the Babe, muchleſs of the ſtrong Man, in Chriſt: But of the ſtrong Man out of Chriſt; him that is ſtrong in his own Will, in his own Conceit, being heady, high-minded, Contentious, Quarrelſom, Impatient; who, if he cannot in all things be humoured, and have his own way, flies out into open Oppoſition, to work Diviſion and Separation, as theſe Adverſaries have done. For however; They now palliate, and in words ſmooth over the Liberty and freedom They pretend to, as if it were only a Liberty to chuſe or refuſe things according as they are perſwaded: yet their Practice (which in this caſe is the beſt Diſcoverer of Intentions) hath ſufficiently manifeſted what freedom, what Liberty They ſeek; A Liberty to Oppoſe Friends in ſuch Things as Friends are ſatisfied in; A Liberty to reproach, revile, deſpiſe, ſcoff and Jeer at thoſe Things that are conſcientiouſly received and practiſed by Friends, and which Themſelves neither have ſhewed, nor can ſhew any Evil to be in, but only pretend They are not Convinced of the Needfulneſs or Uſefulneſs of them; A Liberty to revile and vilifie Friends in Print, under the names of Apoſtates, Innovators, Introducers of *Popery*, and but one ſtep from it, Idolaters, Setters up of Images, Idol-Prophets, a treacherous Company, poſſeſt with the Spirit of *Belial*, Mercinary Judges, Self-ſeeking ſlaviſh Drudges, led by Satan, *&c.* A Liberty to rend off, divide and ſeparate from Friends, and ſet up ſeparate-Meetings, in divers parts and places, out of the Unity of Friends, and in direct Oppoſition to them; And yet after all this, and in the midſt of all this, and maintaining all this, to come when and where They pleaſe, to Friends Meetings, as pretending to joyn with Friends in Worſhip, and impoſe upon Friends their Preaching and Praying, and expect that They (who have given the higheſt Demonſtrations of Their being our greateſt

Enemies, and perſiſt therein) ſhould notwithſtanding be owned and received as Friends, as Brethren, as Preachers, as Miniſters of Chriſt amongſt us. This is the Liberty They have taken, this the freedom they plead and preſs for. And this is ſuch a piece of Hypocriſie, and groſs Deceit as, I verily believe, cannot be paralleled among all the Pretenders to Chriſtian Religion. This to be ſure is a Myſtery of Iniquity; And therefore, ſeeing They pretend not to extend the Liberty, of chuſing and refuſing things, according as They are perſwaded, to any but ſuch as are in Chriſt, p. 4. And that They muſt travel through the whole Myſtery of Iniquity, before they can come into Chriſt, p. 7. They muſt needs travel out of theſe things before mentioned, before they can pretend to be within the compaſs of their own Plea.

In their 4th page, They ſay, *Foraſmuch as he neither hath, nor we believe, can give us any certain undoubted Rule, how to know who theſe are that are ſo to be left, all that he hath ſaid by way of affirming this great Queſtion, is worth nothing; for as it is altogether unintelligible, 'tis every way impracticable.* Again, *If any certain Rule can be given to know who may be left to their Liberty as above, let us have it* (ſay they) *and by the contrary Rule we ſhall know who may not be ſo left.*

Reply; By this They ſhew themſelves to be out of the Truth, in the Uncertainty. If they were in the Truth, they would not be to ſeek of a certain Rule in this caſe, the Spirit of Truth giving Certainty and Aſſurance to them that are guided by it, though not to them that reſiſt it. Now though they have not explain'd what they mean by Who theſe are, or how they expect a Deſcription of them, whether by Qualifications, or by Perſonal Marks; yet each way they are wrong. For if they would have a Rule to know them by Qualifications, they themſelves (with ſufficient Contradiction to themſelves, while they make as if they believed no ſuch Rule can be given) have adventured to give it, aſſigning them to be ſuch as are in Chriſt, even from the Babe in Chriſt to the ſtrong Man, and ſo to all ſtates (but ſtill in Chriſt.) Now that this cannot take in (even in their own ſenſe) the whole promiſcuous Number of thoſe that go to Friends Meetings, that hear Truth preached, or that by Tongue, or outward Profeſſion only, confeſs to the Truth of the Principle, their own Deſcription or Explanation of what it is to be in Chriſt, pag. 7. will manifeſt: For there they tell us, that *Man*

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muſt be made a new Creature before he can come into Chriſt, he muſt travel through the whole Myſtery of Iniquity; that *the Reſt is only by being in Chriſt, the Travel is while he appears in us to fit us for himſelf; for 'tis* (ſay they) *the New Creature that only finds room in him.* (So then the Travel muſt be over before they come to be in Chriſt) *For*, ſay they, *the Enemy, that fallen Angel, can go with Man into every Remove, whilſt man is fitting and preparing, but into Chriſt he cannot come.* Theſe are ſome of the Qualifications by which they deſcribe who ſhould be left to their freedom, *&c.* But if this may paſs for a Rule with them, why may not that as well, which the Author of that Book they pretend to anſwer, laid down therein, *viz.* that they may ſafely be left to their freedom in the things of God, who are ſuch as can do nothing againſt the Truth, but for the Truth; ſuch whoſe freedom ſtands in the perfect Law of Liberty? If they ask, *But by what certain or undoubted Rule ſhall we know who are ſuch?* I Reply; When they have told me, by what certain or undoubted *Rule* they know who are in Chriſt, according to the Explanation they have given of being in Chriſt, that is, who they are that are certainly and undoubtedly made New Creatures; who they are that have certainly and undoubtedly travelled through the whole Myſtery of Iniquity; who they are that have certainly and undoubtedly gone beyond, where the Enemy can go, into Chriſt where he cannat come; I will then tell them, who they are whoſe freedom ſtands in the perfect Law of Liberty, *&c.*

They add, *But if no ſuch Rule* (that is, no certain or undoubted Rule) *can be given, it muſt follow, All muſt be left free, or None muſt be left.*

Reply; They are very quick at their Conſequences. But it concerns them to ſee that their Conſequence contains no more than their Premiſes. When they ſay, *All muſt be left free*; what *All* do they mean? All that are called *Quakers?* or only All that are in Chriſt, from the Babe in Chriſt upward? If they ſay only All that are in Chriſt, (according to the Deſcription they have given of being in Chriſt) what more or other is that, than the Author they carp at had ſaid before? If they mean All that are called *Quakers*, that's more (by their leave) than is in their Premiſes. For there they ſay, Therefore we believe, where the Gift of God is received to profit withal, and truly adhered to, there muſt be a Liberty to

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chuſe and refuſe things according as ſuch are perſwaded, even *from the Babe in Chriſt, to the ſtrong Man*, &c. And ſure they will hardly ſay, that *All* that are called *Quakers* have *ſo* received the Gift, have *ſo* adhered to it, have *ſo* profited with it, as to be really in Chriſt (and that according to their forecited Deſcription of being in Chriſt) though but in a Babiſh ſtate or degree. They were therefore too haſty in their Concluſion that *All* muſt be left free, or *None*. They ſhould have remembred, that the Definition of true Spiritual Liberty (to which they ſay they agree) was, Deliverance from Sin by the perfect Law of Liberty in the Heart, a being made free indeed by Chriſt the Truth. All have not this freedom. They cannot be left to it, who neither have it, nor know it. Muſt therefore None be left to it, although they know it, and have it? They ſhould have conſidered, that Spiritual Liberty was declared to be two-fold; True, and Falſe: So that there is a falſe Liberty, a falſe freedom, as well as a True; a Liberty to do our own Wills, upon which comes Reproof and Judgment. *Examinat. of Lib. Spir.* p. 1. Would they have All, nay, would they have any left to this freedom, to this Liberty, to do their own Wills, in Oppoſition to God's Will? That would bring Reproof and Judgment indeed.

Now becauſe it is a pleaſing and deſirable thing to man's Nature to be left to its Freedom, to be at Liberty to do, or not do, what it pleaſes, and how it pleaſes, in Religious, as well as in Civil matters; whereupon it may ſound harſh in the Ears of ſome, that any ſhould not be abſolutely and unqueſtionably left to their own Freedom, to do what they think fit, without being accountable to others: Therefore that I may remove all grounds of Offence and Stumbling on this occaſion, out of the way of ſuch as are honeſt-minded, I am willing here, as briefly as with plainneſs I can, to open the matter further. Firſt therefore, a little to explain the Terms, and ſhew what is meant by thoſe words [Not to be left to ones Liberty to act as one is free, *&c.*] I take the meaning thereof to be, that no Perſon, who doth profeſs to be a Member of a true Chriſtian Society, ought, or hath right to plead any Exemption, upon the account of his Liberty or Freedom, from being called to an Account by that Society which he profeſſes to be a Member of, in caſe ſuch Perſon ſhall do any thing repugnant to the Principles of that Society, or tending to the Defamation or hurt thereof. But that every ſuch Society

Society hath power to call any ſuch profeſſed Member to an Account, in order to inform him, and open his underſtanding, if he be weak and dark; to Reprove, Rebuke, and Exhort him to Repentance, if he prove heady, wilful, contentious and Unruly; And if he obſtinatly perſiſt therein, to refuſe any further Fellowſhip with him, until he manifeſt true Repentance. This is the Power, the utmoſt Power, that the Church of Chriſt claims, namely to Inform, Inſtruct, Reprove, Admoniſh, Exhort to Repentance ſuch of her profeſſed Members as go aſtray, and (if nothing leſs will ſerve) to refuſe Communion with the Impenitent, and thoſe that reject her, and declare them not to be of her. Now that it may appear how reaſonable as well as needful it is, that there ſhould be ſuch Power in the Church of Chriſt, I deſire the Reader, in the next place, to conſider, that in the beſt Religious Societies of men, there have always been (as to outward Profeſſion) Good and Bad, True and Falſe, Right and Wrong. With *Iſrael* of old there came up, out of *Egypt*, a mixt Multitude, or a great mixture, *Exod.* 12. 38. Beſides which, many of the *Iſraelites* themſelves, when they came to be tryed in the Wilderneſs, proved to be Murmurers, Complainers, Gain-ſayers and Rebellious: So that the Apoſtle rightly obſerved, they are not all *Iſrael*, which are of *Iſrael*, *Rom.* 9. 6. In the Chriſtian Church, at the firſt gathering thereof, many that walked a while with Chriſt, ſo far as to be reputed his Diſciples, went back, and walked no more with him, *John* 6. 66. How it was afterward, in the Apoſtles times, the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles ſufficiently ſhew. There were in the Church at *Corinth*, ſome that were carnal, and walked as men, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3. There were many, the Apoſtle tells the *Philippians*, that ſo walked, that they were the Enemies of the Croſs of Chriſt, *Phil.* 3. 18. There were ſome in the Church at *Theſſalonica*, that walked diſorderly, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 11. There were ſome in the Church in *Pergamos*, that held the Doctrine of *Balaam*, who taught *Balack* to caſt a ſtumbling-Block before the Children of *Iſrael*, to eat things ſacrificed to Idols, and to commit Fornication (for by that name doth the Holy Ghoſt call thoſe unlawful Marriages, of Believers with Unbelievers, which *Balaam* taught *Balack* to draw the Children of *Iſrael* into with the *Midianiſh* Women.) *Rev.* 2. 14. There were ſome alſo in that Church, as well as in the Church in *Epheſus*, that held the Doctrine of the *Nicolaitans*,

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ver. 6. & 15. Which by Eccleſiaſtical Writers is delivered to have been Community of Wives, as well as of other things. And ſure enough it was ſome great Evil, which Chriſt expreſt his Hatred of. There was in the Church in *Thyatira* the Woman *Jezabel*, ſeducing (like *Balaam*) to Fornication, &c. Not to fetch inſtances out of every Church, there were ſome that walked after the Fleſh, in the Luſt of Uncleanneſs, 2. *Pet.* 2. 10. Theſe were preſumptuous, ſelf-willed, deſpiſed Government, and ſpake Evil, not only of Dignities, but of things they underſtood not, *ver.* 12. Yet theſe were great ſticklers for Liberty: for *They promiſed Liberty* to ſuch as they allured, being *themſelves* mean while the *Servants of Corruption*, ver. 19. Of whom a more full deſcription may be ſeen in the reſt of that Chapter, and in the Epiſtle of *Jude*. Thus it was in thoſe times. How it hath been in our time, ſince the Lord firſt gathered us to be a peculiar People to himſelf, they muſt have had but little Experience, or made but little Obſervation, that need to be informed. How many that have walked for a while (ſome for ſome years) with Friends in the Profeſſion of Truth, have turned their backs thereon, and gone off, ſome into the Sea again, ſome into Nets! Whathas been the general pretence of theſe, but want of Liberty? the way of Truth was too ſtrait for them? they wanted a broader way. How many, even of them that retained the Profeſſion of Truth, have ſtept aſide, ſome into one odd thing, ſome into another, under pretence that they had Freedom ſo to do? Did not they that ran out in *J. Perot's* buſineſs, plead being left to their Freedom, to their Liberty? They did ſo: and by that Plea were ſome, to my knowledge, betrayed into that ſnare. Now ſince it is evident, by the Inſtances given, that in the true Church in all times, there have been (as to outward Profeſſion) Bad as well as Good, wrong as well as right, what can be more reaſonable, than that there ſhould be in the true Church ſuch a Power, as may enable thoſe that are right to acquit themſelves, their Principle and Profeſſion from the Diſorders, of whatſoever kind, committed by them that are wrong; which they can never do, if thoſe that are wrong may exempt themſelves from being called to account, and reproved for their Diſorders, by alleadging that what they have done, they had Liberty and Freedom in themſelves to do.

Now this hath happened, in a great part, through a miſunderſtanding

ſtanding and miſapplication of true Spiritual Liberty. For though all that have received, and are indeed guided by the Grace of God and Spirit of Truth, are to be left to it, to act for God in the Liberty and Freedom that it gives. Yet for any to infer from thence, that every one that pretends to the Grace of God and Spirit of Truth, (though it be too apparent that they are not ſubject thereunto) muſt be left to that Freedom, which they call (and in one ſenſe rightly enough) their own, to that Liberty which they have ſet up in and for themſelves, though it leads ſuch to thwart, oppoſe, gain-ſay and diſturb the reſt of the ſame Society; this is not right, but (whatever elſe may be pretended) is both wrong it ſelf, and an Inlet for that which is wrong. For the meaning of that Plea, that every one ought to be left to his Freedom, &c. Is this, that none ſhould be accountable, or anſwerable to the Church, or Congregation they are reputed to be of, for what they do, (that is not ſimply Evil, or Evil in it ſelf, as the Adverſaries in their Book diſtinguiſh) ſo that, although what they do be diſorderly, and that which either directly, or by Conſequence, tends to bring ſcandal, and trouble upon the whole Society; it is enough to ſtop the Churches Mouth, for ſuch an one to ſay, I have Liberty and Freedom in my ſelf to do ſo or ſo. And thereupon the Church may not judge, may not reprove, may not blame ſuch an One; but muſt be obliged to own and receive ſuch an one as a Friend, a Brother in the Truth (though walking out of Truth) as a member of the Body (though acting againſt the Body.) This were to ſet up a falſe Liberty, to overthrow the true Liberty; to give Liberty to Particulars, and take it from the General: which to do, were contrary to Truth, and to true Reaſon. For ſurely, how much Liberty ſoever a Part may claim, the whole may claim as much. And therefore, if each Particular hath Liberty to chooſe, or refuſe things, according as they are perſwaded the things are right or wrong (which it is fit they ſhould:) Why ſhould not the whole have like Liberty to receive, or refuſe ſuch Perſons, with reſpect to Membership, according as they are perſwaded that ſuch Perſons, ſo acting, are in, or out of, that Spirit in which the true Membership ſtands? But this Liberty the Church ſhould be deprived and debarred of, if ſhe were bound (as the Adverſaries would bind her) to own and receive for members all ſuch as make any Profeſſion of Truth, though walking and acting

contrary to Her, and (as ſhe believes) to Truth, under pretence that they walk and act according to their own Liberty and Freedom. He that would ſhun the Croſs of Chriſt in any Teſtimony that Truth leads to, hath ſcope enough under this Plea to do it. He that, for advantage or fear, will break Chriſt's Command, and Swear, can ſay he hath freedom ſo to do, and is not perſwaded in his own mind of the unlawfulneſs thereof. He that, to ſhun Sufferings, will pay Tythes to the Hireling-Prieſt; He that will Marry by the Prieſt, or take in Marriage one that is not in the Profeſſion of Truth, hath the ſame Plea for his Shelter; and ſo in other Caſes of Evil.

This the Adverſaries ſaw, but ſaw not how to Anſwer: And therefore in their 5th page, having ſaid, There's but one Objection, and that is, that this (leaving all to act according as they are free, &c.) is to give Liberty to Evil; they add, *Which we may ſpeak to in another place.* And ſo they ſhift it off in this place. And having thus given it the Go-by here, never give any direct Anſwer to it (that I obſerve) throughout their whole Book. In their 19th page they touch it, but preſently ſtart back, and ſlide off of it again. There they ſay, *What can hinder the putting this in practice, but the Devil in the likeneſs of Truth, perſwading this was to give Liberty to Evil?* Then add, *'Tis a miſtake to think, this is to give Liberty to Evil, while our End, we are ſure, bears witneſs to the contrary.*

Rep. They are ſure! What Aſſurance doth their ſaying, they are ſure give to others? Their witneſs-bearing, as it is of themſelves, and for themſelves, may perhaps reach no further than to themſelves. But ſuppoſe Charity ſhould extend it further, and on that foot it ſhould be granted, that their End, or Intention, is not to give Liberty to Evil. Doth it therefore follow that that unlimited Plea, for leaving every one ſo to act, according as they are free and perſwaded in their own minds, as not to be accountable for their actings, may not give Liberty to Evil? May not People have a wrong freedom, a freedom to do Evil, and a falſe Perſwaſion in their own minds, that that wrong freedom is a right one, notwithſtanding that God hath given them a manifeſtation of his Spirit to profit withal, if they do not (and it is too plain that too many do not) obey and follow the leadings of that good Spirit, that they may profit thereby? But what Anſwer do the Adverſaries now give

to

to that One Objection, which they took notice of in their 5th page, and then made a ſhew as if they would ſpeak of it in another place? Truly none at all. But inſtead of anſwering it (which was reaſonably to be expected from them) they excuſe themſelves, but very poorly, from Anſwering: for after they have told us, They are ſure their End is not to give Liberty to Evil, they add, *But to Anſwer All the Objections that may be made, as it would take up too much time, ſo perhaps we may not know all that may be advanced; ſo we ſhall Omit that, till we are better informed of them, as alſo, till more fitting Opportunity do occur.*

Rep. A dull Come-off! Who, that were ſhameleſs, might not, at this rate, avoid Anſwering any Objection that lies hard upon them, by pretending it would take up too much time to anſwer all Objections, and that perhaps they may not know all that may be advanced? They told us in their 5th page, There is but one Objection; and that is, That this is to give Liberty to Evil; and they made a kind of Promiſe to ſpeak to that in another place. (Why did they not anſwer this One Objection, which themſelves had advanced?) Now, becauſe they know not what to ſay to it, nor how to Anſwer that One Objection; they pretend it would take up too much time to Anſwer all the Objections that may be made, and that perhaps they may not know all that may be advanced. Is not this pittiful Shuffling? Is not this mean Trifling for men! for ſuch men! for men ſo cryed up, as ſome of them are? *Perhaps*, ſay they, *we may not know all that may be advanced.* What then? ſhould that hinder them from taking notice of what they did, or might know, of what was advanced? Did not the Book they pretend to Anſwer enumerate ſeveral Particular Evils, which the Enemy by that Plea (of leaving every one to act as he is free, *&c.*) is introducing a Liberty to, as Paying Tythes to Hireling-Prieſts; Marrying by the Prieſt, Declining a publick Teſtimony in ſuffering times, or hiding in times of Perſecution, Worſhipping and reſpecting the Perſons of men; and Obſerving the World's Holy-days and Maſs-days (as they call them?) Why did they not Anſwer theſe that were advanced, as there phraſe is? Did they want to be better inform'd, whether Theſe are Evils or no? They could not but know, that moſt of theſe Evils have been cloſely charged, as the Fruits of that Spirit they are now joyned to. And their ſo ſlightly ſlipping over them now, is no good ſign that they are whol-

ly clear and free from them. They boaſt indeed of Life and Converſation; but diſtinguiſh not (that I obſerve) betwixt Converſation Civil and Religious, betwixt that which relates to the World, and that which more eſpecially reſpects the Church of God. 'Tis true, they ſay in general words, p. 43. with reſpect to Lives and Converſations, *Place your Judgment upon what is Evil, and ſpare not, for there it will ſtand; for we plead not for Evil in any.* And again, *We grant that any may reporve Evil, and what is Immoral*, &c. p. 46. But their explaining Evil by the terms Immoral, and ſimply Evil (as in pag. 39. where they ſay, *If Nothing that is ſimply Evil or Immoral, can be charged upon your Brethren*, &c. And in p. 44. *Though nothing that is Immoral, or Evil in it ſelf can be proved againſt them*) ſhews they mean by Immoral, ſuch open Prophaneneſs and Debaucheries as Human Laws correct. And ſo, notwithſtanding their pretending Not to plead for Evil in any, their Plea may indulge and countenance thoſe Evils before mentioned, of paying Tythes to the hireling Prieſt, of being married by the Prieſt, *&c.* and of marrying ſuch as are out of Truth, yea, out of the Profeſſion of it; yea, and of all the Diſorders that heady and unruly Perſons are capable of committing againſt Church-Society, by raiſing and fomenting Strife and Contention amongſt Brethren, by drawing and gathering into Parties, Sides and Factions, by making Schiſms, Rents and Breaches, by running into down-right Diviſion, and open Separation. All which are Evils, and ſuch Evils as the Judgment of Truth always was, is and ought to be placed upon. But ſeeing the Adverſaries hide themſelves under the Terms [Simply Evil, or Immoral] let me ask them more particularly, Whether it be not an Immoral Act for any one to deprive Another, by force or fraud, of his juſt Right and Property? They know what of this kind has been done by ſome of their own Party at *Reading*, and other Places, where they have forcibly kept Friends out of their publick Meeting-Houſes, and deprived Friends of their juſt and lawful Right and Property in thoſe Meeting-Houſes, contrary to all Right and Juſtice. Now though Truth's Judgment hath been placed, and doth ſtand and abide, upon this Evil, and upon the Authors and Abettors thereof; And though, being ſo undeniable in fact, and ſo groſs in nature, ſome of the Adverſaries are aſhamed, or afraid to plead for it: Yet which of them all has joyned with Friends in placing the Judgment of Truth upon it,

it, and upon them that are more immediatly guilty of it? Nay, do they not rather own and joyn with ſuch as have been and are moſt guilty in this caſe, and receive ſuch of them as are Preachers, to preach and pray amongſt them?

In their 5th page, they take a ſlight notice of the latter part of the Author's Anſwer, where he ſaid, But if thou pleadeſt thy Freedom againſt ſuch things, yea, Obſtructeſt and Slighteſt ſuch Good, Wholſom and Requiſit Things (namely ſuch things as are Holy, Juſt, Lovely, Honeſt, Comely and of good Report, as he had mentioned juſt before) thy freedom is naught, dark, perverſe, out of the Truth, and againſt the perfect Law of Love and Liberty. In the reciting of which, I obſerve, they ſlip over theſe words [obſtructeſt and ſlighteſt] as being Conſcious perhaps that they have done ſo, and have no colourable defence to make for their ſo doing. Their Anſwer to the reſt is this, *This is ſtill to the ſame Tune; here is a Judge implied, but not ſet forth; 'tis not* (ſay they) *the Spirit of Truth, but ſome outward thing, whatever it is*; and they add, *We know not where he will fix*, &c.

Rep. To the ſame Tune! They were in a jolly Humour ſure, when they borrowed this Phraſe from the Ballad-mongers. So pag. 17. they ſay, *Shall we Pipe to the ſame Tune for Company*. Truth would have taught them more Gravity: and it is to be hoped their beguiled Proſelites will obſerve and take notice what a frothy Spirit they are guided by. But though they ſay, The Judge is not ſet forth, but only implied; and by ſuch ſaying [Whatever it is] they imply they know not what it is; nay, they confeſs in plain Terms, they know not where he will fix: yet, in this *tuning* ſtrain they as boldly as blindly (that is confeſſedly not ſeeing, or knowing what it is) adventure to affirm, 'Tis not the Spirit of Truth. By which the Children of Truth know, that the Adverſaries, in this Judgment, are out of Truth.

In the ſame airy Vein they go on thus, *But ſince we know not where he will fix, to ſay no more, 'tis dark to be ſure*; Then (as if, on a ſudden, they would grow very kind) *to help it all we can*, ſay they, *we ſhall thus far grant, there are ſome Outward things ſo far Eſſential to true Religion, as thoſe that do contrary to them may be detected of Error.*

Rep. If it was dark before, how much clearer is it now? For they mention not a Syllable what theſe outward Eſſentials are. They com-

complain of want of Certainty in the Book they pretend to anſwer: yet themſelves leave it wholly uncertain what they mean by theſe outward Eſſentials. They ſuggeſt here, that in that Book things are laid down in a general way, in which (they ſay) Deceit or Cunning often lurks. Yet ſure, nothing could be laid down in more general terms, than they have here mentioned their outward Eſſentials; for what to lurk under, let themſelves Conſider, others judge.

But they ſay, *The things ſuggeſted as the Ground of Difference, are neither ſuch Principles nor Practices as have been from our beginning, nor yet ſuch things as can be truly ſaid to be Eſſential to true Religion.*

Rep. I will not here Deſcant on their beginning, though the conceitedneſs of the Expreſſion would even invite to it. But I would know what things thoſe are, that they ſay are ſuggeſted, as the Ground of Difference, and by whom they are ſo ſuggeſted. Are not theſe Generals deſigned for a ſhelter for ſomething to lurk under? But ſuppoſe for the preſent, that the things they ſuggeſt, are ſuggeſted as the Ground of Difference, are neither ſuch Principles nor Practices as have been from their beginning; what then? Is their Beginning the Boundary? the *Nil ultra?* Was there a Bar then ſet, a limitation to the illimitable Holy One, that Nothing, not then in Practice, ſhould thereafter be ever brought into Practice, for the Service of the Church of Chriſt? But ſay the Adverſaries (and they bid us Obſerve it) *If the things ſuggeſted as the Ground of Difference, are not Eſſential things, nor yet ſuch things as have been from our beginning, then they can at beſt be but Circumſtantial, or if you will, Ceremonial or Shadowy Things, and ſuch things at beſt are but accidentally good, that is* (ſay they) *as Perſons are perſwaded of them, and what is but accidentally good, may on the contrary be accidentally not good, and that is* (ſay they) *as Perſons are diſſatisfied with them.*

Rep. 'Tis fit we ſhould (as they deſire) obſerve this: For I think there are many things obſervable in it. *Firſt*, when they ſay, If the things ſuggeſted, *&c.* are not Eſſential things, not yet ſuch things as have been from our beginning, they can at beſt be but Circumſtantial; They plainly imply, that if thoſe things had been from their beginning, they might have been more than Circumſtantial, although they had not been Eſſential things. An Abſurdity that, at beſt, muſt needs ſpring from conceited Ignorance. *Secondly*,

By

By making the terms Circumſtantial, or Ceremonial and Shadowy, *Synonomous*, or of the ſame ſignification, They render all outward Performances of Goſpel-worſhip, contrary to the nature of it, Shadowy; ſince no outward Act of Worſhip ever was, or ever can be performed without Circumſtance. If the other Paſſage ſhewed their Ignorance, this, I think, will not commend their knowledge, at leaſt, in divine matters. *Thirdly*, their ſaying ſuch things are at beſt but accidentally good, ſavours of no good underſtanding or ſenſe. But *Fourthly*, In making ſuch things accidentally Good, or not Good, according as Perſons are perſwaded of them, or diſſatisfied with them, they have exceeded common Weakneſs; and to ſpeak favourably, draw too near to the borders of *Ranteriſm*. For it was the grand Notion of the *Ranters*, and the ſource of their immodeſt and unclean Practices, that things were no otherwiſe Good or Evil, than as Perſons apprehended or thought them to be ſo: Only they extended it more generally: Theſe ſeem to reſtrain it to ſuch things as they call Circumſtantial or Ceremonial, which yet they confound with Shadowy. But let me ask theſe Adverſaries, Do ye think or hold, that this was always ſo; or only ſo now of late, ſince your Beginning (as ye ſpeak) that is, were all Circumſtantial things, or (according to your notion) Shadowy things, always, in all times, and places, good, or not good, according as Perſons were perſwaded of them, or diſſatisfied with them? Or are they ſo now of late only: There were many Circumſtantial Things attendant on the Service of God under the Legal Diſpenſation and Shadowy Things, not a few. Were thoſe things then good, or not good, according as Perſons were perſwaded of them, or diſſatisfied with them? Or would a Perſons being diſſatisfied with any of thoſe things then, have freed him from the Obligation of them? That had been a ready way indeed to have made void the Commandments of God. But even the Rebellious *Jews*, as bad as they were, never (that I remember) made ſuch a Plea. Will ye rather chuſe to ſay that, though it was not ſo then under the Law; yet it is ſo now, under the Goſpel? But ſince ye have reſolved Circumſtantials into Shadowy things; what will ye do with them under the Goſpel? Will ye aſſert ſhadowy things to be Good now, under the Goſpel, if Perſons are perſwaded they are ſo? Be perſwaded to conſider better of it firſt. At this rate, the ſame Act of Religious Worſhip may, at the ſame time, and in the

the ſame Aſſembly, be good to one, not good to another of the ſame Society, according as they differently eſteem it. It will, on this ground, be as good for men to offer up publick Prayers to God with their Hats on, if they are ſo perſwaded and ſatisfied, as to Pray with their Heads uncovered. For ye ſhall find, if ye look rightly into it, that this Notion of yours is but a freſh Sprout from the old Root of the Hat-Controverſie in *John Perot's* time. I have ſome cauſe, more perhaps than every one of you, to underſtand this Wile of the Enemy, having been in ſome degree beguiled by it then. In humble reverence of Soul, and with thankfulneſs of Mind, I pay this Acknowledgement to the God of my Deliverance, who was graciouſly pleaſed to ſhew me this Snare, and deliver me out of it. And in tender pity, I warn you of it.

Another ſtrange Notion the Adverſaries have immediatly after theſe, in their 5th and 6th pages, where ſpeaking of things which they ſay, They believe concern only the outward Court; They add, *Which God hath left unmeaſured, on purpoſe that Chriſtians might never differ about them.* This they repeat in their 9th page, ſaying, *We are ſure that he hath left ſuch things on purpoſe unmeaſured, that men might agree.* As if what God had meaſured, he had therefore meaſured that *Chriſtians* might differ, that men might not agree. For their affirming that God hath left ſome things unmeaſured, on purpoſe that *Chriſtians* might never differ about them, implies (by that way of contrary arguing which they ſo much uſe) that God hath meaſured ſome things on purpoſe that *Chriſtians* might differ about them. But as that were wicked to imagin: So I wiſh the diſcovery of ſo many abſurd and falſe Notions as have here (in a few Lines) dropt from them, may awaken them and others, to conſider what Spirit it is they are guided by.

When they ſay, they believe, nay, are ſure, God hath left ſuch things (as they except againſt) unmeaſured, on purpoſe that Men might agree, that *Chriſtians* might never differ about them; I take their meaning to be, that God hath therefore left ſuch things free, that ſome may practice them, others not practice them, according as either ſort like or diſlike them, without taking offence at each other therefore. Now if this be their meaning, this is of force againſt themſelves, to clear the things they except againſt from having Evil or harm in them: for if there were any Evil or harm in them,

them, God would not leave any of his People at liberty to uſe them. And then all the Clamour and Out-cry, Diviſion and Miſchief the Adverſaries have made, is againſt things which they cannot in Truth ſay have any Evil or harm in them.

In their 10th page, the Adverſaries take up another Queſtion out of the forementioned Book, which in that was thus laid down. *But muſt I conform to things whether I can receive them or no? Ought I not to be left to the Grace and Spirit of God in my own Heart?* The Anſwer was, to the *firſt* part of the Queſtion, *Nay:* to the laſt, *Yea.* This Anſwer they ſeem to like: for they ſay of it, *This is fairly ſaid we muſt confeſs.* But as fairly as it was ſaid, they unfairly alter it, in taking upon them to explain it; for reciting the Author's Anſwer, *viz.* to the firſt part of the Queſtion, *Nay*; that is, ſay they, *Thou ought not to receive things againſt Truth.* Whereas the firſt part, nor any part of the Queſtion was not, *Ought I to receive things againſt Truth?* But it was, *Muſt I conform to things whether I can receive them or no?* Betwixt which Anſwer, and their explanatory Gloſs, there is no ſmall difference, both in words and matter. For it is one thing, Not to conform to things, becauſe I cannot receive them (which may be, and yet the things be agreeable to Truth, and the fault in me only, that I am not in that which would lead me to receive them.) And it is another thing, Not to receive things againſt Truth, which none ought to receive, and which it would be Evil in me to receive and conform to, if I could. But though in this they deal not fairly by the Author; yet by his Anſwer it is evident, that none is put upon Conforming to any thing that they cannot receive: But all are left to the Grace and Spirit of God in their own hearts (which is that that leads into the true Spiritual Liberty before defined) though not to the freedom of their own unruly Wills, to oppoſe, obſtruct, revile and vilifie thoſe things, which they ſay They cannot receive, and them that have received and do practice them: muchleſs to rend, divide, ſeparate from them, and yet break in upon them, and force upon them their Preaching and Praying, as if they were ſtill of them, though apparent Enemies to them.

But though they ſeem to approve his Anſwer at the firſt, yet they ſoon find fault with it again; becauſe they think there is not ſufficient Proviſion made by him for withſtanding the things, if the fault be in them. *Repl.* How may we ſuppoſe he could admit the

fault to be in the things, which he præ-ſuppos'd to be good, whol-ſom, and requiſit? Or how can the fault be in the things, if God hasle ſt them, as the Adverſaries ſay, unmeaſured; that is (if I reach their meaning) free for his People to practice, or not practice. He would not leave any thing for ſome of his People to practice, which others of his People could not practice from a fault in the thing it ſelf. And although from the Author's asking, Is the fault in the thing themſelves? They would gladly catch an advantage to infer, that *It is fairly implied, if not granted, that the fault may lie on the ſide of the things brought in*; yet they fall ſhort in that alſo: for Interrogatvies have ſometimes the force of Negatives. The Apoſtle, when he ſaid, *Is there Unrighteouſneſs with God?* Rom. 9. 14. did not imply, muchleſs grant, that there might be Unrighteouſ-neſs with God. But they add, that *The fault doth lie in the things, for any thing he hath ſaid to prove the contrary.* Repl. It ſeems they ex-pected a proof of Negatives. That were needleſs. 'Tis enough that they have not proved a Fault in the things they reject and de-ſpiſe. When they attempt that, a diſproof thereof, I believe, will not be wanting. They ſay, *We may conclude ſuch as bring them in* (viz. the things they ſay are ſuggeſted as the ground of Difference) *are reputed Leaders.* Repl. I ſay ſuch as raiſed the Oppoſition at firſt, and made the Diviſion thereby, and led into the Separation thereupon, were reputed, and were, Leaders among them. They add, p. 11. *The Leaders may do more harm in bringing in things that are wrong, than others can do in Oppoſing ſome things that may in ſome ſort be right.* Repl. If this be true to any purpoſe, yet it is no-thing to this purpoſe. The things they complain of for being brought in, they have never proved to be wrong, nor ever can; therefore there has been no harm done, by bringing thoſe things in, as their Phraſe is. But the harm has been done by the heady and unruly Oppoſition they have made againſt thoſe things that are right. They ſay, *The Leaders have cauſed the People to err, and the effect was, that the People led by them was devoured.* Repl. This is rightly applicable to themſelves: The Children of Light, in the Light, ſee it, and lament over them. Their Leaders have cauſed them to err, and by following them, they have been led into that Separation, which, unleſs by Repentance they quickly return from, will certainly deſtroy them. Again, they ſay, *The way to prevent*

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the danger is, by allowing freely Conviction and Perſwaſion to precede Conformity. Repl. This is an evil Suggeſtion, by which they would inſinuate, that Friends did preſs Conformity before Conviction and Perſwaſion: which is utterly falſe, contrary to our Principle, and contrary to our Practice. That it is contrary to our Principle, the Book and place they here pretend to Anſwer, evinces: For there the Author, having put the Queſtion, *Muſt I conform to things whether I can receive them or no?* Anſwers directly and poſitively, Nay; And even ſo they cite his words. In the ſame place alſo he ſays, *Thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly; yet thou art to conſider, why thou art ignorant, and what the cauſe of ſuch Ignorance may be.* What can be plainer! That it is contrary to our Practice alſo, is matter of Fact. Let the Adverſaries therefore prove if they can, that Friends preſs Conformity before or without Conviction.

They go on in their 11th page to quarrel with another expreſſion of his, which is this, "It is a dangerous Principle, and pernitious to "true Religion, and which is worſe, it is the Root of Ranteriſm to "aſſert, that nothing is a Duty incumbent upon thee, but what thou art perſwaded is thy Duty. Againſt this they make a great noiſe. *This*, they cry out, *is as removing a Bounder or Land-mark.* *'Tis*, they ſay, *of the ſame nature with Conviction or Perſwaſion; for if* (ſay they) *Conviction and Perſwaſion is to go before Conformity in our duty to God and true Religion, then nothing can be a duty incumbent upon us, but what we are perſwaded on: But if duty to God and true Religion muſt be performed before convinced or perſwaded to it, then ſomething may be a duty incumbent upon us, that we know not, or are not perſwaded on.*

Rep. Here they confound Duty with performance of Duty or Conformity to Duty; which are different things, and ought to be diſtinguiſhed: and their not diſtinguiſhing them has puzzled their heads. Performance follows Duty; not Duty, Performance. Duty, in order of time, as well as in the nature of things, is before Performance, as the Cauſe is before the Effect. Now the Aſſertion here taxed for a dangerous Principle is not, that nothing can be performed as thy Duty, but what thou art perſwaded is thy Duty: But, that nothing is a Duty incumbent on thee, but what thou art perſwaded is thy Duty. Though it be true, that a man cannot rightly perform a thing as his Duty, which he is not perſwaded is his Duty: yet it doth not thence follow, that it is not his

Duty, becauſe he is not perſwaded it is his Duty. It is not ſimply want of perſwaſion or conviction, but want of ſufficient means for perſwaſion or conviction, that can exempt any man from the obligation of Duty. The *Jews*, though they had ſufficient means for conviction, or perſwaſion that it was their Duty to own and receive Chriſt for the promiſed *Meſſiah*, yet were not perſwaded that that was their Duty; was that therefore not a Duty incumbent upon them? *If I had not come, and ſpoken unto them*, ſaith Chriſt, *they had not had ſin: But now they have no Cloak for their ſin*, Joh. 15. 22. Why ſo? They were never the more perſwaded of their Duty for his ſpeaking to them. Well, but they had ſufficient means to have been perſwaded, had they not reſiſted it. We read of ſome of old, that of ſome things were *willingly ignorant*, 2 Pet. 3. 5. Of others, before them, that ſaid unto God, *Depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy Ways*, Job 21. 14. Unlikely were theſe to be perſwaded of Duty. Was therefore no Duty incumbent on them? This were a ready way indeed for men to diſcharge themſelves of all Duty, if through negligent Careleſneſs, or wilful reſiſting, they harden themſelves againſt Conviction. But as that is a dangerous ſtate; ſo this is a dangerous Doctrine: And the endeavours the Adverſaries uſe to juſtifie and eſtabliſh it, render their Bottom the more juſtly to be ſuſpected.

Now let us ſee what Mediums they uſe to maintain this Doctrine or Principle, that nothing is a Duty incumbent upon one, but what he is perſwaded is his Duty; *If*, ſay they, *to aſſert or believe that nothing is a Duty incumbent upon us, but what we are perſwaded on, be in its ſelf a dangerous Principle, pernitious to true Religion, and what is ſtill worſe the Root of Ranterism, then the Saying that ſtands againſt this muſt be as Good as that is Evil; that is, it muſt be a Safe Principle, propitious to true Religion; and which is ſtill better, it ſhould be as the Root of all Good to men: for we conceive, the Root of Ranterism is as the root of all Evil.*

Reſp. Here they run a Ground again, by tampering unskilfully with Logical Concluſions. To ſhew them their miſtake, I refer them to 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. The Apoſtle there ſays expreſly, *The Love of Money is the Root of all Evil.* Doth it therefore follow, or will they thence infer, that the Hatred of Money is the Root of all Good? They ſay, *The ſaying that ſtands againſt this, muſt be as Good as that is Evil.* Now the Apoſtle having ſaid, *The Love of Money is the Root of all Evil*;

Evil; the saying that (according to their sense) stands against this saying of the Apostle, is, that the Hatred of Money is the Root of all Good. But I think they are not so much out of love with Money, as to assert that.

They run on, pag. 12. in the same false way of Reasoning, thus, *If to assert that Nothing is a Duty incumbent on us, but what we are perswaded on, be the Root of Ranterism, &c. Then, to avoid this Shoal, we must believe that something is a Duty incumbent upon us, that we are not perswaded on; and if we can thus believe, we must of necessity depend on him or others, to let us know what our Duty is.*

Rep. This is the thing the Adversaries drive at, to make their Proselites believe, that Friends endeavour to draw People from a dependence on the Gift and Manifestation of God in themselves, to depend on them for direction to, or information in their respective Duties. But this is utterly false, a wicked Slander and an evil Design to beget in such a Prejudice against Friends, that they may the more easily gain, the more strongly bind such to their Party. Nor is their way of Reasoning here fair or forcible. For supposing something is, or may be a Duty incumbent upon a Man, which he is not perswaded to be his Duty; it doth not thence follow, that he must of necessity depend on some other Man, to let him know his Duty. This is no true Consequence. Though the Adversaries say, *If we can thus believe, we must of necessity depend on him or some other, to let us know what our Duty is*; yet there is no such necessity. The necessity such an one is under, is, to depend more truly on the Gift of God in himself, to attend more diligently and duly thereon, that so by and from that Manifestation of the Spirit, which God hath given unto him to profit withal, he may come to receive a right Sense, a true Understanding, a clear Discovery of the Mind and Will of God to him, with respect to that Duty or Thing, which hitherto, for want of such a due and diligent Attendance upon the heavenly Gift in himself, he has not had a clear sight of, a full satisfaction in, but has been in the dark and doubting concerning it. So that the supposing a Possibility for something to be a Duty incumbent upon a man, which he is not perswaded is his Duty, hath no tendency to draw him from a dependence upon the Gift of God in himself for a discovery thereof; but rather to drive him home to it, to excite him to a more close and diligent attendance thereunto, that he

he may thereby come to see and know what yet he doth not. For, if the Adversaries do, yet none else, I think, will think that every man doth, at all times, so watchfully attend upon the Gift of God in himself, that he doth not at any time miss, or fall short of knowing the mind of God thereby. He, to be sure, thought otherwise, who said, *God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not*, Job 33. 14.

Now this Slanderous Suggestion of the Adversaries, is the more vile and wicked in them, in as much as they know it to be a Slander; and that very Book, which they pretend to Answer, doth plainly prove it so. For in the 10th page of that Book (called, *A brief Examination and State of Liberty Spiritual*) to the Question, *But if I do not presently see that Service in a thing, that the rest of my Brethren agree in, in this case what is my Duty?* The Answer is, *It is thy Duty to wait upon God in silence and patience, out of all fleshly Consultations; and as thou abidest in the Simplicity of the Truth, thou wilt receive an Understanding with the rest of thy Brethren, about the thing doubted.* Is this to draw from the Gift of God in ones self, to depend upon others for Guidance? Yet the Adversaries say, pag. 12. *This* (to wit, that something may be a Duty incumbent upon one, though he be not perswaded it is his Duty) *is to impeach the Grace of God, and Spirit of Truth, to whose sufficiency so many Testimonies have been born, as not now sufficient to lead all into all Truth.*

Rep. No such matter. They had no cause to suggest this; no ground for it. The Book they pretend to Answer denys it positively; for asking where the fault is, it says, pag. 3. *Is it thy weakness, or thy Carelessness? If thy weakness, it is to be born with, and to be informed; if thy carelessness, then ought'st to be admonished.* And a little lower in the same page it follows thus, *So that though thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly, yet thou art seriously to consider, why thou art ignorant, and what the Cause of such Ignorance may be; Certainly it can't be in God, nor in his Gift to thee* [mark that] *it must then needs be in thy self*, &c. This is plain enough; and this they could not choose but see, picking up matter just before and after it; which shews they had *a design to abuse* Friends, and that makes their guilt the greater. Yet thus they go on, adding Falshood to Falshood. For in their same page they say, *The Consequence of his arguing is to make us believe, that something is a Duty incumbent upon us that we do not know, and yet at the same time doth not let us know on whom we may depend.*

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Whereas (as I have cited before) he ſaid expreſly, pag. 10. *It is thy Duty to wait upon God, in ſilence and patience*, &c. So that he did let them know on whom they were to depend, namely upon God. Again, they inſinuate as if their not underſtanding their Duty, were placed upon their *Inability*. Whenas they know, it is laid upon Careleſneſs, Diſobedience, Prejudice, *&c.* But this they do, on purpoſe to render Friends odious to their ſeparate Party, as if we held that ſomthing may be a Duty incumbent upon one, which he *cannot* know, which he is in no capacity of being perſwaded of; whereas indeed we hold no ſuch thing. For what is *impoſſible* for a man to know, to underſtand, or be perſwaded of, cannot be ſaid to be a Duty incumbent on him. But what he *may* know, what he hath *ſufficient means* to underſtand, what he is put into a Capacity to be convinced and perſwaded of, by the Gift and Manifeſtation of the Spirit, which God hath given him for that end, may be a Duty incumbent on him, althongh he, through his Careleſneſs, Negligence, Non-attendance on the Gift, or prejudice againſt the thing, hath not received a certain Knowledge, Underſtanding, Conviction or Perſwaſion that it is his Duty. Had the Adverſaries taken the matter plainly and fairly, as it was laid down in the Book they pretend to Anſwer. They had not thus run beſide the line. But their manner is (as is obvious to an obſerving Reader) when they have pickt out a Sentence which they intend to oppoſe, to turn it this way and that way, to ſhift it to and fro, to alter the form of it, till they have varied it from the Author's Terms and Senſe, and fitted it to their own turn and ſervice, and then triumph over it. Thus (beſides other Inſtances) they have done in this particular caſe. The ſentence, as they firſt quarrelled with it, was this; *It is a dangerous Principle, and pernitious to true Religion, and which is worſe, it is the Root of Ranteriſm to aſſert, That nothing is a Duty incumbent upon thee, but what thou art perſwaded is thy Duty.* No ſooner had they drawn this forth, but in their firſt modelling of it, they ſlip in the words *Conformity* and *Performance*; whereas *Duty* is one thing, *Performance* of it another, as I have noted before. Then in the next place, they frame up another Sentence, in terms (as they apprehend) directly oppoſit to this, and argue from one to t'other, till at length they have ſlipt it quite beſide its firſt and right bottom, and ſet it upon a bottom of their own, an *Inability* to underſtand; Where-

Whereas the ſentence is not, that it is a dangerous Principle to aſſert that nothing is a Duty incumbent on thee, but what thou art *in a Capacity*, or *haſt means* to underſtand or be perſwaded of (for there were no danger in aſſerting that) But, its a dangerous Principle, *&c.* to aſſert, that nothing is a Duty incumbent on thee, but what thou *art* perſwaded is thy Duty. There is ſome odds, ſure, betwixt thou *art* perſwaded, and thou *mayſt be* perſwaded, or thou *art in a Capacity*, or thou *haſt means* of being perſwaded. Yet the Adverſaries, confounding theſe Terms, run on to the ſame effect. For, taking offence at the mentioning of ſeared, dark, dead Conſciences, in the Book they pretend to anſwer (which the Author there mentioned, to ſet forth the dangerouſneſs of aſſerting as a Principle, that nothing is a Duty incumbent on thee, but what thou *art* perſwaded is thy Duty: for, ſaid he, *The ſeared Conſcience pleads his Liberty againſt all Duty, the dark Conſcience is here unconcerned, the dead Conſcience is here uncondemned*, &c.) They ſay, p. 13. *There is a vaſt difference betwixt denying all Duty to God, and believing nothing a Duty but what we are perſwaded on. The firſt*, ſay they, *deny all duty; the latter owns all Duty that can be known.*

Repl. This is a high and bold, but not a falſe expreſſion. To own all Duty that can be known, is not an ordinary ſtate. But let us ſee who this firſt is, that denys all Duty, and who the latter. The firſt, that which pleads Liberty *againſt all Duty*, is expreſly term'd the *ſeared* Conſcience, in the Book & place the Adverſaries pretend to Anſwer. The *dark* Conſcience, and the *dead* Conſcience, are not there charg'd with that, with pleading Liberty againſt *all* Duty, or denying *all* Duty. How then know the Adverſaries but the *dark* Conſcience may find a place among the *Latter*, among thoſe that believe nothing a Duty, but what they are perſwaded of? And how then will it hold that the Latter, they that believe nothing a Duty but what they are perſwaded of, do indeed own *all* Duty, that can be known? Will the Adverſaries, upon ſecond thoughts, adviſedly and conſideratly aſſert, that *All* they who believe nothing a Duty but what they are perſwaded of, do really own *all* Duty that *can* be known? I don't think they will. Nay I find they begin already to flag from it, within two lines: for they immediatly ſubjoyn thus, *The firſt denying all Duty is Evil; but the Latter, as they own all Duty that they know, ſo*, &c. Here it is not (as above) *all* Duty that

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can be known; but *all* Duty that *they know*. If they own all Duty that they know; 'tis well: But there is ſome odds ſure, betwixt owning *all* Duty that *they know*, and owning *all* Duty that *can be known*. But ſo little conſtant to themſelves, ſo little conſiſtent with themſelves, are the Adverſaries, ſo looſe and regardleſs of the terms they write in, that *Do know*, and *Can know*; *Are known*, and *Can be known*, ſeems to be alike with them. They add, *As the Latter own all Duty that they know, ſo may they wait truly to know what God is pleaſed further to ſhew.* Rep. I grant they may ſo; I wiſh they would ſo; and it is that which All are exhorted to. But if they do not ſo, what then? What may be, may not be. And I ſuppoſe the Adverſaries will grant, that as they *may*, ſo it is not impoſſible but that they *may not* wait ſo truly, as to know what God is pleaſed further to ſhew. And then, if by reaſon of their not waiting, or not waiting ſo truly and rightly as to know what God is pleaſed further to ſhew, they fall ſhort of, miſs and deprive themſelves of the knowledge of what God is pleaſed further to ſhew, or what God requires as a Duty of them; will their falling ſhort through their own default, and miſſing the knowledge thereof, make it not to be a Duty to them? There were indeed times of Ignorance, the Apoſtle ſaith, *at which God winked*; *But now he hath commanded All men every where to Repent*, Acts 17. 30. Why now? Becauſe now the Goſpel Light, the diſcovering Light, the univerſal Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, is ariſen and broken forth; by the inſhinings whereof every one is put into a Capacity to know and underſtand what God requires of him.

After all this, in pag. 14. They tell us, *They believe where the Gift of God is received to profit withal, and truly adhered to, nothing is a Duty incumbent upon ſuch, but what they are perſwaded on.*

Rep. Here now they have given it another ſtretch. What was ſpoken with direct relation to a ſtate of Careleſneſs, Diſobedience, Prejudice, *&c.* or a ſeared, dark, or dead Conſcience, they apply to ſuch as have received the Gift of God to profit withal, and truly adhered thereto; and make their Inference from that miſapplication.

What they ſpeak, pag. 13. concerning Circumſtantial things being called requiſit things, on the ſcore that we could not (as they ſay) know dead, dark and ſeared Conſciences without them; hath

 nothing

nothing in it but an *unsavoury Scoff*, fit to discover what *frothy Spirit* it came from. But when they ask, in the same flouting manner, if *those Requisit things that keep out or make known those dead, dark and seared Consciences*, &c. *can keep out Hypocrites*, I must tell them, that is in one sense a difficult matter. For truly, I think, there can hardly be a grosser sort of Hypocrites found, than those that having publickly printed Friends to the world to be *Apostates*, *Innovators*, *Introducers of Popery*, *Idolaters*, *setters up of Idols*, with much more of that kind, and having upon that score (as they pretend) separated from us, and set up separate Meetings of their own, will and do yet come, whether we will or no, into our Meetings, in shew and pretence of joyning with us in Worship, and impose upon us to hear them Preach and Pray among us, and require to be received and owned by us therein, after they have so publickly disowned us, and departed from us. But though such Hypocrites will not keep out, but will thrust in, yet they cannot keep themselves from being discovered, but are known to be what they are.

In their 15th page, they carp at an Expression, taken out of the 9th page of that Book which they pretend to Answer. It is this, *A Saying may be true or false, according to the Subject Matters it is spoken upon, or applied to.* They say, *We believe he has missed the Truth there.* And repeating it, pag. 44. they say, *That we believe is a mistake; for we think Truth's Testimonies are not false, because some may misapply them.*

Rep. The Author's words are not, that Truth's Testimonies may be true or false, *&c.* But, that a Saying may be true or false, *&c.* Now we know every Saying is not Truth's Testimony. And yet, even that which is a true Testimony when spoken of or applied to a right Subject, may not be a true Testimony, when spoken of or applied to a wrong Subject. When the Apostle said, *I have fought a good Fight, I have kept the Faith*, &c. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown*, &c. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. This was a true Testimony, as spoken of or applied to him. But this same saying, if applied to or spoken of *Judas*, *Demas*, or any other Apostate or wicked Person, would not have been true, but false. But though they Cavil at this saying from him, yet they could be content the same sort of Expression should pass for Truth from them, when they thought to serve their own turn by it. For in their 4th pag. blaming his Answer to that

Question,

Queſtion, which he ſaid was true in a ſenſe, they ſay it is ſo far true, that if it can be *wrong* at all, 'tis only in a ſenſe, and that is only *when miſapplied*. (Miſapplying, then it ſeems, can make a Right ſaying Wrong, when they hope to get ſome advantage by it, elſe not. Doth not this ſhew both great Partiality, and a captious mind? So alſo, they wrangle much about that Expreſſion, *The Root of Ranterism*; Whereas they might eaſily have ſeen it to be a Metaphorical or Figurative Speech, to ſhew that that Aſſertion was a Radical or Fundamental Principle or Doctrine of the *Ranters*, from which (as Fibres from a Root) other erroneous Tenets did ſprout forth and grow up. But this ſhews their propenſity to Contention and Quarrelling.

Now that it may moſt evidently appear, that all this Out-cry againſt the Author, and Clamour againſt this Paſſage in his Book, as tending to bring in blind Obedience, and draw from a Dependance upon God, to a Dependance upon Man, for diſcovery of Duty, *&c.* is without ground, and that his Book hath not given them any colourable Occaſion for it; but that they have wickedly perverted, and wreſted both his words and meaning in that Paſſage: I deſire the Reader more particularly to obſerve that Paſſage, and conſider the Occaſion, ſcope and drift of it. For the Occaſion, it is manifeſt it was written with direct relation to the *Careleſs* ſtate, to thoſe who, through Heedleſneſs and Inadvertency, neglect and diſregard the divine Gift in themſelves; and ſo, for want of attending thereunto, are ignorant of its motions, and what the Lord by it requires of them. For having put this Queſtion, But *muſt I conform to things whether I can receive them or no*? and anſwered directly and flatly, *Nay* (which poſitively excludes blind Obedience;) the Author thereupon puts the Queſtioniſt to conſider what the Reaſon is that he cannot receive them, that ſo he may find where the Fault lies, whether in himſelf, or elſewhere. Therefore he ſubjoyns, *Is the fault in the things themſelves? Are they inconſiſtent with Truth, or will not the Truth own or aſſent unto them*? As much as to ſay, If thou canſt make appear that thou canſt not receive them, becauſe the things themſelves are faulty, as being inconſiſtent with Truth, then thou wilt appear clear in not receiving them. But if thou canſt not rightly lay the fault upon the things themſelves, then conſider whether the fault is not in thee, that is to ſay, *Is it thy Weak-*

neſs, or thy Careleſneſs? If thy weakneſs, it is to be born with, and to be informed; if thy Careleſneſs, thou oughteſt to be admoniſhed: for though thou mighteſt have acquitted thy ſelf, if thou couldeſt juſtly have laid the fault upon the things themſelves, as inconſiſtent with Truth; yet thou canſt not clear or acquit thy ſelf by laying the fault upon thy Ignorance, if thy Ignorance proceed from, or be occaſioned by thy own Careleſneſs. And becauſe ſome have entrench't themſelves in their own Ignorance, and thought themſelves ſecure from Obligation to Duty, under a Plea of want of ſight; therefore to excite ſuch to a cloſer Inquiry, to a ſtricter Search, to a more diligent waiting upon the Lord, for a clear diſcovery and ſight of his will, the Author there adds, that *It is a dangerous Principle, and pernitious to true Religion, and which is worſe, it is the Root of Ranterism to aſſert, that nothing is a Duty incumbent upon thee, but what thou art perſwaded is thy Duty.* And to evince the dangerouſneſs of this Aſſertion, and ſhew in particulars the Perniciouſneſs of this Principle, He adds, *For the ſeared Conſcience pleads his Liberty againſt all Duty, the dark Conſcience is here unconcern'd,* (reckons its Darkneſs, its Ignorance, it was want of ſight and Conviction, a ſufficient defence and excuſe, and ſo concerns it ſelf no further) *the dead Conſcience is here uncondemned, unleſs this Diſtinction be allow'd of, that there may be an Ignorance or an Inſenſibility from Inability or Incapacity, or a dark Education* (which he comprehended before under the word Weakneſs) *and an Ignorance and Inſenſibility from Careleſneſs, Diſobedience, Prejudice,* &c. Hence it is moſt apparent that this Paſſage related to the careleſs, diſobedient, dark Ones, who make darkneſs their refuge, want of ſight there ſhelter. To ſuch it is ſaid, by way of Reproof and Admonition, It is a dangerous Principle, &c. to aſſert, that nothing is a Duty incumbent upon thee (thou careleſs, diſobedient, prejudiced, dark One) but what thou (who, by thy own Careleſneſs, Diſobedience or Prejudice, haſt brought Darkneſs upon thy ſelf) art perſwaded is thy Duty. Now this being the plain and clear import of the place, it is not without violence and great Injuſtice, that the Adverſaries have ſtrained, and applied this to ſuch as have received the Gift of God to profit withal, and have truly adhered thereunto. Then, as to their Suggeſtion that the Author's drift, and the tendency of his Diſcourſe, was to lead into blind Obedience, and from a dependence on God, it is

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utterly groundleſs. His own words prove the contrary, not only (as I noted before) in ſaying poſitively *Nay* to the Queſtion, Muſt I conform to things whether I can receive them or no? But alſo, when in the ſame page, and on the ſame ſubject, he ſays expreſly afterwards, *Thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly.* This fully ſhuts out blind Obedience. And ſo far was he from drawing to a Dependence on Man, for ſight or underſtanding in point of Duty, that he expreſly ſays, pag. 9. *The People of God ought to be left to the Guidings of the Spirit of God in themſelves.* And pag. 10. *It is thy Duty to wait upon God in ſilence and patience, out of all fleſhly Conſultations, and as thou abideſt in the ſimplicity of the Truth, thou wilt receive an underſtanding with the reſt of thy Brethren about the things doubted.* Theſe are Evidences plain enough: Yet becauſe the Teſtimony of an Enemy is accounted of great force, and unexceptionable, take here, for an over-plus, the Adverſaries own Confeſſion in the caſe, p. 16. where, of the Author of that Book they are ſo offended at; they ſay, That he deſires all ſhould be guided by God's Spirit, we believe. Now, if they believe this of him, what, Reader, may we believe of them, who have raiſed all this Noiſe and Clamour againſt him, charging him that he would bring in blind Obedience, frighten into blind Obedience, and lead to a dependence on himſelf or ſome others; and yet now, after all this, confeſs they believe, *He deſires all ſhould be guided by God's Spirit!*

But notwithſtanding they ſay they believe thus of him, they preſently blames him again, p. 16. for *limiting it* (as they ſay) *to that one way, with reſpect* (as they apprehend) *to Shadowy or Circumſtantial things*, &c.

Reply. Here again, and frequently in their following Diſcourſe, they run into their former Error, confounding Shadowy with Ceremonial and Circumſtantial things, as if they were all alike, and had all but one and the ſame ſignification; thereby rendring (in their ſenſe) all Circumſtantial things Shadowy things: which to be a great miſtake, and ſuch an one as would make all outward Acts of Goſpel-Worſhip, contrary to the Nature of the Goſpel, ſhadowy, I have ſhewed before. Yet upon this Shadowy Notion of theirs, they take upon them with Confidence to paſs Judgment upon him, that *Though he may have received a meaſure of God's Spirit, yet 'tis plain he is not truly born of it.* And this, methinks, is pretty briskly done

done for such, whose common Theam and Cry was wont to be, *Judge not.*

Next, whereas the Author of that Book they Cavil at, in Answer to that part of the Question which was, *Ought I not to be left to the Grace and Spirit of God in my own Heart?* had answered *Yea; That is of all things most desirable, since they are well left that are there left; for there is no fear of want of Unity, where all are left with the one Spirit of Truth; They must be of one mind, they cannot be otherwise:* To this the Adversaries say, *That those that are truly left with the one Spirit of Truth, must and will agree, we grant; and therefore, where difference is carried on to the breach of Charity, one side at least must be wrong, but which, ought in God's fear to be inquired, the greater Number cannot determine it.*

Rep. Here they grant that those that are truly left with the one Spirit, *must and will agree*, and yet at the same time suppose they *will differ*; and which is more, that they *may differ*, and yet neither side be wrong, if the difference be not carried on to the breach of Charity. How they will reconcile these their different Notions, I know not. But since they yield that one side at least must be wrong, where difference is carried on to the breach of Charity; Let the Difference between them and Friends be looked into, and inquiry made, in God's fear, on which side the Breach of Charity began, that it may thence appear (according to their own Proposition) which side is wrong. And in this Disquisition, we will not expect any advantage from being the greater Number; though they may give us leave to put them in mind, that when and where an Argument from the greatest Number, with respect to particular Places, seemed to lie on their side, they have not failed to urge it. Now in order to a right understanding, how Charity came to be broken in the carrying on of this Difference, it should be remembred, that when some things were recommended to the Churches, relating to Christian Discipline, in order to prevent such disorderly and scandalous Practices, as under an abuse of our Principle of true Christian Liberty, a Spirit of Looseness and Libertinism was introducing, some shewed themselves dissatisfied therewith, and unwilling to admit the use thereof, pretending that they did not see the service of the things recommended. Though this Plea was seen to proceed from weakness in some, and want of a true watchfulness unto, and waiting

waiting upon the heavenly Gift in themselves, which would have given them a true sight and sense, as it did their Brethren, both of the want, and of the usefulness of the things recommended: yet while they kept quiet, out of Contention and open Opposition, Friends tenderly bore with them, and carried themselves Brotherly towards them, endeavouring in the love of God, as occasion offered, to open and inform their Minds in the things, concerning which they profest to doubt. But long it was not ere they, abusing the tenderness of Friends towards them, grew high and heady, contentious and quarrelsome, endeavouring publickly, and labouring much in private, to gather into a Faction, and make a Party. Which when they had in some measure effected (having, by evil Surmises and false Reports, betrayed and misled many young Convinced Ones, and some that were but weak in Judgment, as well as picked up others that were discontented, whose loose Spirits and disorderly Conversations had debarred them of the esteem they coveted amongst Friends) they then appeared more openly to oppose, revile and vilifie those things, which before they pretended to be doubtful of, and not to see a need of or service for, calling them in Contempt and Derision, *Men's Orders, human Edicts, Canons, Constitutions, Prescriptions, Popish Impositions, Innovations, Bulls*, &c. not sparing any reproachful Term, which they thought might beget, or increase, in their Proselited Party, a dislike of the things recommended, and a disesteem of Friends. This their unruly and turbulent behaviour, gave occasion to Friends to reprove them, and exhort them to study to be quiet, and have regard to the Churches peace. And surely had they indeed had any regard to the love of their Brethren, to the peace of the Churches of Christ, to the Reputation of Truth in the world, or to the honour of that holy Name of the Lord, by which we are called, they would never have begun, much less have carried on a Difference, for so high a Breach of Charity, as they have done, and that about such things as some of themselves have declared to be (in their esteem) but trifles, small things, of little or no moment. But notwithstanding the Endeavours, the Labours and Travels that were used by Friends to have reduced them to a better mind, they grew still higher and higher in their Opposition and unruly Carriage, till at length they made not only a Breach of Charity, but of Meetings also, rending off from Friends, and set-

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ting up ſeparate Meetings of their own, for themſelves and their Party to meet apart in, in ſeparation from, and oppoſition to the conſtant ſettled Meetings of Friends, not only with reſpect to the outward Affairs and Buſineſs of the Church, but even with reſpect to publick Worſhip too: And in ſeveral printed Books and Papers (written by ſome, and induſtriouſly ſpread by others of them) publiſhed the difference to the world, expoſing Friends (as much as in them lay) to the Contempt and ſcorn of the Prophane, as *Apoſtates, Innovators, Idolaters, ſetters up of Images, Idol-Prophets*, poſſeſſed with the Spirit of *Belial*, and the like; and not only to the Government, but even to the Rabble alſo, as a *treacherous Company, Introducers of Popery*, and *but one ſtep from it*, &c. and that in a juncture of time, when the then preſent diſcovery of the *Popiſh Plot* had exaſperated the Nation againſt all that were but ſuſpected to favour that Communion. That this is the true ſtate of the Caſe (though but briefly ſet forth) I appeal to all Friends that underſtand it, and hereupon leave it to all ſuch to judge, in the fear of God, whether the Adverſaries be not they that have made this Difference, and carried it on to the Breach of Charity; and are therefore, according to their own Concluſion, WRONG.

The Adverſaries having granted in their 16th page, that thoſe that are truly left with the one Spirit of Truth, muſt and will agree; they in the ſame page add, *But that there muſt be an Identity of Opinion, as* (ſay they) *we think the School-men call it, that is a Sameneſs of Mind, and Oneneſs of Judgment to Circumſtantial, Ceremonial, or Shadowy things, is ſooner ſaid than proved, and ſavours more of Curioſity, than any real Neceſſity.*

Rep. It may perhaps be thought to ſavour more of Curioſity, or ſomething elſe, as Vain-glory, *Self-conceit*, or a fond *Affectation* of being thought to have converſt with *School-men*, than of any real neceſſity, or common Diſcretion, for them to tell us what the *School-men* call *Sameneſs of mind*, eſpecially unleſs they could have done it upon better aſſurance than an [*as we think.*] They had better have kept in the School of Chriſt, where they might have learnt *Sameneſs of mind*, and *Oneneſs of Judgment* with God's People in the things of God, than have puzzled their brains about *Identity of Opinion*, and made themſelves ridiculous by Cracking of their Converſe with School-men. But leaving them to their thoughts, and the School-men to themſelves, they might have learnt from the Author of the

Book

Book they are ſo angry with, if it had pleaſed them to have taken notice of it, that there is a difference between *Sameneſs* of mind, and *Contrarineſs* of mind; between *Oneneſs* of Judgment, and *Oppoſition* of Judgments. But if I may tell them ſo, without offending them too much, the word *Opinion* (with reſpect to Religious matters) is fitter for the School-men, than for any that would be taken for a *Quaker*. Nor is it aptly or properly expounded by the word *Judgment*: For *Judgment* implies *Certainty*, and ſhould be *Poſitive*; whereas *Opinion* is but *Suppoſitive*, importing uncertain or doubtful Thought.

They complain, pag. 16. that the Author of the Book they would Anſwer, hath not made *a difference between Circumſtantial things, and ſuch as are truly Eſſential.* Yet they themſelves have not yet told us what things they account truly Eſſential. They ſaid indeed once, pag. 5 *There are ſome Outward things ſo far Eſſential to true Religion, as thoſe that do contrary to them may be detected of Error.* But they have not particularlized what thoſe outward things are, nor whether they intend them for *abſolute* Eſſentials. But they are in the dark, and in Confuſion, and no wonder, having kickt againſt the Light, and that wholſome Order which the Children of the Light have in the Light received. They ſay, *Though all that fear God muſt and will agree in things truly Eſſential, yet there is no neceſſity that they muſt agree in Circumſtantial things.*

Rep. This ſeems to me as if they ſhould ſay, All muſt agree in things Eſſential; but they may differ, diſagree, wrangle, jangle, contend and fall to pieces as much as they will about Circumſtantial things; *There is no neceſſity that they muſt agree in them.* Strange! But whence ſhould this Liberty of diſagreeing proceed? Are not all to be led by the One Spirit of Truth *into all Truth*, into Circumſtantials, as well as into Eſſentials? Or will the Adverſaries ſay, that in Eſſentials indeed the Spirits Guidance is to be expected; but for Circumſtantials, every one may chooſe for himſelf, and pleaſe his own humour? If they will grant (which methinks they ſhould ſcarce dare to deny) that into Circumſtantial things all ought to expect, and may receive the Spirits guidance and leading, as well as into thoſe things which they call Eſſential, will they then find any room for the Diſagreement they contend for? Can any one of a ſound mind think, that the one holy Spirit of Truth will

lead his Followers to contradict one another in Practice, any more than to contradict one another in Words? If all are led by the Holy Spirit, he will undoubtedly lead them to agree, not to disagree, in whatsoever he leads into. Of the Primitive Christians it is written, *The Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul*, Acts 4. 32. Was it only in such things as are accounted Essential? Or was it in all things then relating to Religion amongst them, even in those things that were rather Circumstantial than Essential? It may seem to be spoken more immediatly of those things: for it follows in the Text, *Neither said any of them, that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things Common.* Yet none, I suppose, will affirm that the Community they had of Goods and outward Substance was Essential to Religion: for then they that hold not that Community of Goods, would want an Essential part of Religion.

In their 17th page, having surmised before, that some Circumstantial things have been over-valued they say, *On the other hand, some, seeing this as a certain wrong, the Enemy hath aggravated the matter to make both wrong*, &c. Here they seem willing to own themselves faulty, provided they may fix some fault too upon those they design to asperse; But they may be supposed to understand *their own Guilt*, better than anothers. If they are truly sensible that the Enemy hath made *them wrong*, let them return to that which can make them Right. They add, *It is our danger, and will continue until the Spirit of the Son of God be more plentifully poured forth upon us that can say, Father forgive them, they know not what they do*: *This* (say they) *is that which we want, and should truly wait for, that the great Deceiver, the Occasion of all Strife and Trouble among such as fear God, might be cast out*, &c.

Rep. That saying, Father forgive them, they *know not what they do*, if it be spoken according to Truth, and in the Spirit of the Son, can be spoken only of such as *know not what they do*. The *Jews*, of whom the Son of God so spake, *Luke* 23. 34. *knew not what they did* in Crucifying him that came to save them. *Paul* bears them that witness, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. Now it is one thing, not to be able to say of Opposers, Father forgive them, they know not what they do, from a belief or perswasion that *they do know* what they do: And another thing, not to be able to say of Opposers, Father forgive them, they know

know not what they do, from a want of the Spirit of the Son, which alone can inable in Truth to ſay ſo, though there be a perſwaſion that the Oppoſers do not know what they do. Now this, it ſeems, is the ſtate of the Adverſaries; the want of the Spirit of the Son of God, plentifully poured forth upon them, that can ſay (of ſuch as oppoſe them) Father forgive them, they know not what they do. *This* (ſay they) *is that which we want, and ſhould truly wait for, that the great Deceiver might be caſt out*, &c. That this relates to themſelves, appears by the Advertiſement which they give at the end of their Preface, where they ſay, the word [*We*] may be underſtood in reſpect to thoſe of the ſame mind with the Author of their Book. Their want of this, ſhews their Condition to be bad; their not truly waiting for it, ſhews it to be worſe. And ſince they acknowledge, the great Deceiver, the Occaſion of all Strife and Trouble among ſuch as fear God, is not yet caſt out, it is no wonder that he hath thus long *deceived them*, and yet doth deceive them, out of whom he is not yet caſt, and through them occaſions ſo much ſtrife and trouble to thoſe that truly fear God. But, as if they had already forgot what they have here acknowledged, they in the next page ſay, *As we can truly ſay, Father forgive them, they know not what they do, we are not without hope.* But they deceive themſelves, if they think they can truly ſay that, while they want the pouring forth of the Spirit of the Son of God upon them, in and by which alone that can be truly ſaid. But, bleſſed be God, Friends (whom theſe Adverſaries oppoſe) have received the pourings forth of the Spirit of the Son of God ſo plentifully, as that they can therein ſay of many, whom the great Deceiver hath, through the Adverſaries, deceived, and by Deceit drawn into the Separation with them, *Father forgive them, they know not what they do.*

But though they here acknowledge the great Deceiver is not caſt out, yet they ſay they hope *his caſting out is near: for* (ſay they) *there ſeems but one grand Remove to know the Myſtery of Iniquity finiſhed; and that is* (ſay they) *to know our habitation in God, who we have profeſſed hath appeared in us by his Light and Spirit.*

Rep. It ſeems then they do not know their Habitation to be in God now. But if they know not their Habitation in God, in what do they know their Habitation to be? Or do they not know where, or in what their Habitation is? Oh uncertain and ſad eſtate! Our

Saviour Chriſt ſaid, *Joh.* 65. 6. *He that eateth my Fleſh and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* If the Adverſaries object that this is an high ſtate, let them know, that all ſhort of this *is too low*, the ſame Mouth having expreſly ſaid, verſ. 53. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his Blood; ye have no Life in you.* The beloved Diſciple ſaid, *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God*, 1 John 4. 16. Again, *He that keepeth his Commandments, dwelleth in him*, chap. 3. 24. And *hereby*, ſays the ſame Apoſtle, *know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*, chap. 4. 13. The Apoſtle *Paul* dedicated two Epiſtles to the Church of the *Theſſalonians*, which is *in God the Father, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* By all which it appears, that it is the proper ſtate of God's People to have their Habitation in God, and that God's People then had, and did know their Habitation in him. And ſurely, I cannot but in Charity believe, that ſome of thoſe that are in the Separation, have formerly known in ſome meaſure, an Habitation in God alſo. But not keeping in the true Love, but going out of that into the Enmity; not keeping his Commandments, but rejecting, oppoſing, ſcorning, ſlighting, deſpiſing, reviling and vilifying them, and inſtead of Teaching others to keep them, diſcouraging and diſwading others from keeping them, have (like the Angels which kept not their firſt Eſtate, or Principality, *Jude 6.*) left their Habitation in God; and now, by their own Acknowledgement, do not know their Habitation in him, who they have profeſſed hath appeared in them by his Light and Spirit; but muſt have one grand Remove more, before they can come to know their Habitation in God again. O that all the Beguiled ones among them would weigh this well, and ſee and conſider what their Separation hath brought them to, even to be deſtitute of an Habitation in God! Nay, if according to what they deliver in their 7th page, As man muſt be made a new Creature, before he can come into Chriſt, ſo muſt he travel through the whole Myſtery of Iniquity; *In the laſt ſtep of which travel*, they ſay, *the Myſtery is finiſhed*: then, ſince with them the Myſtery of Iniquity is not yet finiſhed, but there is one grand Remove yet behind to know the Myſtery of Iniquity finiſhed) they are not, it ſeems, yet come in to Chriſt.

In their 17th page they ſay, *To make leſſer things than Eſſential things*

things Terms of Communion, we have observed to be a great Evil in others, and shall we cry it up as good in our selves? And in pag. 18. They speak of making *Nothing Terms of Communion but Essential things.* And something to like purpose they toucht before, p. 6.

Rep. This is, first, an evil Insinuation, to prejudice Peoples minds against Friends, as if Friends did set up this, that, or t'other thing, as Terms of Communion with us. Secondly, it is a plain Indication, that the Adversaries do not truly and rightly understand the Saints Communion, and the terms thereof. Amongst other Religious Societies, as the Communions are outward and visible, so the Terms of such Communions consist only in outward and visible things; as an outward verbal acknowledgement of Creeds, Doctrines, *&c.* and an outward or actual Observance or Performance of such things as are reputed Ordinances, Duties, Rights, *&c.* the confessing the former, and doing the latter of which, intitles any one to those Communions. But the Communion or Fellowship of the Saints in Light is another thing. For as the Dispensation of the Gospel is Spiritual, so the Communion or Fellowship which stands in the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 5. is Spiritual also. The Apostles declares the Terms thereof to be *walking in the Light*, when he says, *If we walk in the Light, as he is in the Light, we have Fellowship one with another*, &c. 1 *John* 1. 7. As therefore the Communion of God's People is Spiritual, so the Terms of that Communion are, to receive the Holy Spirit, to be led by the Spirit, to walk in or after the Spirit, to obey the motions and requirings of the Spirit. So that it is not an acknowledgement of Doctrines, or an Observation of outward Practices, that can bring any one into the Fellowship or Communion of the People of God (for the one may be in Words acknowledged, and the other in Act performed, by such as neither believe the one, nor regard the other.) But it is a being truly subjected to, and led by the Spirit of God, both to believe and confess to the Doctrines of Truth, and to take up and appear in those Practices which the Spirit of Truth leads into, that are indeed the true Terms of the true Spiritual Communion. And as a coming under the Government and Guidance of the Spirit of Christ, brings into Communion or Fellowship with the Church of Christ: So the departing from the Government and Guidance of that Holy Spirit, the grieving, the quenching, or resisting of the holy Spirit in its requirings

quirings, ſhuts out of the Communion or Fellowſhip of Chriſt's Church. And as ſuch a departure from the Guidance of the holy Spirit may be felt, and known by thoſe that keep under the Spirit's Guidance, by the holy Unction, and that Spiritual Senſe (ſo much at this day by the Adverſaries ſet at naught) which the People of God do from thence receive, as the Lord is pleaſed to diſpenſe it: ſo may it alſo be certainly and ſafely concluded, from either an Abrenunciation and Denyal of any of the Doctrinal Principles of Truth, or from an oppoſing, rejecting, ſlighting, or reviling of any Practice which the Church of Chriſt is by the Spirit of Chriſt led into. So that, though no outward things (whether Doctrines or Practices) are, or can be the Terms of true Spiritual Communion: yet the rejecting, oppoſing, deſpiſing and ſlighting ſuch outward things, as the Church of Chriſt is by the Spirit of Chriſt, led into the practice of, and finds acceptance with God in, is a certain diſcovering ſign and token, that ſuch Oppoſers are departed from under the leadings and Government of that holy Spirit, in which the Communion and true Chriſtian Fellowſhip ſtands.

In their 18th page, to ſuggeſt that Friends would uſe Violence as others have done, if they had more power, they ſay, *Do not object, that was only as carried on to Violence; for they that omit nothing of that Power they have, who can believe, if ſuch had more, they would imploy it better.*

Rep. This ſhews their Envy, but doth no more affect us, than it would the Church of Chriſt in all times. The Apoſtles, we read, and Primitive Chriſtians did not omit to exerciſe that Power they had in reproving, rebuking, denying and teſtifying againſt ſuch, in their times, as by looſe and diſorderly walking, or unruly, contentious, turbulent Behaviour, diſturbed the Peace of the Churches, and brought ſcandal upon the Profeſſion. Such (perſiſting in their diſorders) they declared not to be of them: Such (ſo perſiſting) we declare not to be of us. They deſired no greater Power: Neither do we. They, if they had had more Power, could not have uſed it to outward Violence: neither could we, if it were in our power. But what might be expected from the Adverſaries, if they had Power equal to their Wills, who have already given ſo plain a proof of their propenſity to Acts of Violence, that, having no lawful Power, they have *uſurped* a Power to keep Friends by Violence, out of their publick

publick Meeting-Houſes, wherein the Friends, ſo kept out, have a plain, undoubted, rightful, legal Property! Was it not a great piece of Folly, as well as Injuſtice, in them, to ſuggeſt ſuch a thing againſt Friends, which they knew they had no ground for; when they could not but know with what an unavoidable force and ſtroke it would recoil upon themſelves.

In their 19th page they ſay, *Do we think we have been the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy, which* (ſay they) *perhaps we have, as to Notion and Profeſſion of the things of God?*

Rep. They did well to ſay [*We*] that it may be known they ſpeak this only of and for themſelves, having, at the end of their Preface, directed us to underſtand the term [*We*] in reſpect to themſelves. Friends have no need of ſuch Advocates. The People of God, in ſcorn called *Quakers*, they who have received the Truth in the love of it, they who have obeyed the Truth in the manifeſtation of it, they who have kept their habitation in the Truth through the Power of it, can ſay *beyond thinking*, much more beyond thinking with a [*perhaps*,] that they have been (and, through the preſerving Power of God, are) the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy, and that not only as to Profeſſion of the things of God. but as to the true, living, experimental knowledge, injoyment and poſſeſſion of the things of God. And before theſe Adverſaries had turned their backs on Truth, and wandred from their Habitation in God, they too perhaps would, *without a perhaps*, have adventured to have aſſerted this *beyond thinking*, and further than Notion and Profeſſion only. But now we ſee how *low they are ſunk*, that they can content themſelves to ſay, *perhaps* we have been the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy, as to *Notion* and *Profeſſion* of the things of God. *Notion* is a term they often uſe in their Book, but not very properly, with reſpect to the things of God: for *Notion* imports rather an uncertain *Speculation*, than a ſolid, certain, ſcientifical Knowledge, ſuch as is fit to be had of Religious matters. And therefore Perſons of ſpeculative Fancies are often called *Notioniſts*, or men of high Notions. But theſe men, it ſeems, dare pretend at higheſt but to *Notion* and *Profeſſion* of the things of God, to *think* they have *perhaps* been the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy. It ſeems then they do not think they have been the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy, as to Life, Power, Virtue, Sincerity, divine

divine Injoyments, experimental Knowledge in the things of God, Poſſeſſion of the living Subſtance, &c. Nay, with them 'tis but a *perhaps*, that as to Notion and Profeſſion they have been the moſt true that have been ſince the Apoſtacy. But undoubtedly, were they not now Apoſtatized from what ſome of them once have known and been, they would not have written in ſuch a looſe and unſenſible manner.

In the ſame 19th page, they confound themſelves again with another of their own Notions; they ſay, *We know 'tis writ, they ſhall come from the Weſt, North, Eaſt and South, to ſit down with* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob *in the Kingdom.* (I know there's ſomething written to this purpoſe; but where this is thus written, I know not.) Upon this they thus deſcant, *Thoſe certainly was not of one external Form or Order, as to Ceremonial and Shadowy things, yet we find they agree.* (That, ſay I, is more than we can find from theſe: for rather than theſe will agree, they'l Oppoſe, Rail, Revile, Print againſt, Rend, Divide, Separate and Tear, if they could, all in pieces.) *But*, ſay they, *perhaps ſome will ſay this* (agreement of all theſe from the four Quarters) *is in Heaven. Well*, add they, *what then? Muſt they not agree on Earth, that muſt agree in Heaven?*

Rep. 'Tis fit no doubt they ſhould; and 'twere well they would, that expect to come there. But if they muſt agree on Earth that muſt agree in Heaven, then pray conſider, whether ſuch an Agreement as the Adverſaries propoſe, p. 16. *viz.* that they muſt agree in *ſome* things, (ſuch as they account Eſſential) but there is no neceſſity that they muſt agree in *all* things, will ſerve the purpoſe. Muſt the Agreement in Heaven be in *ſome things only*, and not in all? What ſhattered work would theſe Men make with their idle Notions Beſides, is it not too ridiculous in theſe men, ſpeaking of them that ſhall come from the Weſt (for they may be allowed to begin where the Sun goes down, upon whom the Sun is already gone down) North, Eaſt and South, to ſit down with *Abraham*, &c. to ſay, thoſe was not of one external form and order, as to Ceremonial and Shadowy things, and yet we find they agree, and apply this agreement to Heaven? Do they think then that there are Ceremonial and Shadowy things in Heaven too, where many perhaps, if not moſt, of the things which they account Eſſential, will find no place? However, if (as they here, by a kind of affirmative Interrogatives, deliver)

deliver) they must agree on Earth, that must agree in Heaven: If God's will must be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven; then surely they must retract their Notion of a necessity of agreeing in some things (Essentials;) but *no necessity of agreeing* in other things (Circumstantials.) Is the will of God, think they, done in Heaven *by some, one way*, *by others, a clean contrary way* in opposition to that? Their Comparisons help them not, but helps Truth against them.

They go on for a while in a strain of Interrogatives, pag. 20. *Is not Christ*, ask they, *the Head of all that is good, from the least breathing to the fullest perfection*?

Rep. All that is good proceeds from God and Christ. But since Head and Members are Correlatives, and all in whom some little (not to say the least) breathings may be, are not yet come to be joyned to the Body of which Christ is the Head, and brought into a Membership thereof, it seems not a clear and proper Expression to say Christ is the Head of all that is good, &c. There may be good desires, and true (though weak) Breathings after that that is good, in many in whom Christ is not Head, but the evil one is head, and Christ as in the Sepulcher; the Seed, from which those Breathings spring, kept under, crushed down, pressed as a Cart is pressed with Sheaves, *Amos* 2. 13. But among all those of whom Christ is Head ought there not to be an Agreement? Doth Christ, the Head, dispose or allow any of his Members *to quarrel amongst themselves? to oppose one another*? For some to slight, reject, deny and obstruct the work and service of the rest? according to the Doctrine laid down by the Adversaries, pag. 16. That in Circumstantial things (as they call them) there is no necessity that they must agree. These consider not that Christ's *Coat was without seam*, Joh. 19. 23. a Tipe of Unity and *Agreement* even *in Profession*.

They go on; *Doth not he own all that's of his own beegtting, every where, according to the degree of knowledge received?* —— *And as Christ owns all that's good, shall not we own it*?

Rep. Yes; He doth own all that's of his own begetting, and so do his People. But he doth not own all those for his, and as Members of his Body, in whom he hath begot some Breathings; neither do his People. For too many, in whom such Breathings are begotten, answer not the love of him that begot them, but by joyning

with the evil one, and doing that which is evil, ſtifle and quench thoſe Breathings, and greive him that begot them. Therefore as Chriſt owns all that is good, ſo do his People: But neither he, nor they, own all thoſe to be of him, and fellow Members with them, in whom there is ſome good thing. He has given of his good Spirit unto all, even to them that rebel againſt it. The Gift is good, and owned: the Rebellious bad, and diſowned.

They go on; *Doth not he gather all the Good together in one, even himſelf?*

Rep. The Scripture no where ſaith ſo, that I remember. But it ſaith, Ephes. 1. 9. 10. *He hath made known unto us the Myſtery of his will, according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf: That in the Diſpenſation of the fulneſs of times, he* might *gather together in one all things in Chriſt, both which are in Heaven and which are on Earth, even in him.* This Univerſal gathering is not ſpoken in the preſent Tenſe, nor of the *preſent* Time; but *of the fulneſs of Times.* Neither is it ſpoken ſimply of all the good, as they expreſs it; but of *all in Chriſt:* All theſe, both in Heaven and one Earth, hath he purpoſed, in the fulneſs of time, to gather together in one.

They go on; *Doth he gather all Univerſally in every Nation that fears him, and work Righteouſneſs, without reſpect to ſhadowy things,* &c. *wherein they may differ, for thoſe he hath left unmeaſured on purpoſe that they might not hinder,* &c. *And ſhall he not do it in one Nation?*

Rep. The Scripture doth not ſay, He gathers all univerſally that fear him, and work Righteouſneſs, without reſpect to ſhadowy things. But the Apoſtle Petet ſaith *Acts* 10. 34. 35. *Of a Truth, I perceive that God is no reſpecter of Perſons: But in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with him.* This is without reſpect to *Perſons*; not without reſpect to *ſhadowy* things: For they whoſe Righteouſneſs ſtands in *ſhadowy* things, are not *therein* accepted with him. But alſuch as he gathers, in this his day of Goſpel ſubſtance, if they were working Righteouſneſs in ſhadowy things before he gathered them, he gathers them out of the ſhadowy things to the ſubſtance. Here the Adverſaries ſhew Error upon Error. Firſt, They hereby ſuggeſt, that ſuch as fear Chriſt, and are gathered by him, may continue in ſhadowy things; which is contrary to the nature of the Goſpel. This Error ſprings from

another

another (which it ſelf ſprings from extream Ignorance) that all Circumſtantial things are ſhadowy. Secondly, they ſay, that they that fear Chriſt, and are gathered by him, *may differ* (that is, as in pag. 16. they explain it, there is no neceſſity that they muſt agree) *in ſhadowy things*, as if Chriſt gave Liberty to his to differ, diſagree, contradict, oppoſe one another in any thing. Thirdly, that he hath left thoſe things unmeaſured on purpoſe that they might not hinder (that is, not hinder their agreement.) As if thoſe things would have hindred their Agreement, if God had meaſured them; and as if he did meaſure other things on purpoſe that they might hinder the Agreement of thoſe about them, who were to practiſe them. Oh the darkneſs and blindneſs that is come over theſe men!

They add, *The true Church is here indeed, but not yet referrable to any ſociety, with reſpect to outward Rules*, &c.

Rep. This is the voice of the Enemy, that would detract from, and deny the work which God hath wrought, and brought forth by his Power, in this day of his Glorious Appearance; wherein he hath reached unto many, and by the Cords of his Love hath drawn many unto himſelf, and hath gathered them into an heavenly Communion with himſelf, and into an holy Society and pure Fellowſhip one with another in him. Now as the true Church is here indeed, ſo it is indeed *referrable to this Society*, and that too with reſpect to ſuch outward Rules, as Chriſt, who is the Head of this Society, hath given for the well-ordering of ſuch outward things, as relate to the well-being and preſervation of the Society. But if (according to the Adverſaries) the true Church is *not yet referrable to any Society*, with reſpect to outward Rules; what then will become of themſelves! Have they not hereby unchurched themſelves? Or diſclaim'd Membership with the true Church? For do not they pretend to be a Society, and that too with reſpect to outward Rules? How then can they pretend to be of the true Church, which they will not allow to be yet referrable to any Society, with reſpect to outward Rules?

Another Paſſage which they Carp at in the Book they pretend to Anſwer, is by them thus worded; *To plead being left to the Grace of God againſt Unity, is to abuſe the very Plea*, &c. To this they ſay, *The Drift of this Argument is like the reſt, to gaine a preſumptive de-*

Pendance upon men, &c. without true regard to Conviction or Perſwaſion.

Rep. If the drift of this Argument (as they call it) be like the reſt, then it cannot be to gain any dependence upon men, on any conſideration whatſoever, without true regard to Conviction or Perſwaſion: For that has not been the drift of any of the reſt of the Arguments or matter in that Book. But the drift of that Paſſage, and of the reſt alſo, was to draw from a *feigned pretence* of being left to the Grace of God, (as a Cloak of Evil, of any kind) to a real acquaintance with, ſubjection to, and dependance on the Grace of God indeed. This appears (not only from ſeveral other Paſſages in that Book, as, *Thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly*, page 3. And, *It is thy Duty to wait upon God, in ſilence and patience, out of all fleſhly Conſultations*, page 10. *The People of God ought to be left to the Guidings of the Spirit of God in themſelves*, page 9. *It is a great Truth, that all are to be left thereunto*, Ibid, but) very plainly from the words immediately foregoing thoſe which the Adverſaries Cavil at. For the Queſtion being there put, *Ought I not to be left to the Grace of God in my own Heart?* The Anſwer there is, *That is of all things moſt deſireable, ſince they are well left, that are there left; for there is no fear of want of Unity, where all are left with the one Spirit of Truth*, page 4. This was far ſure from a drift to gain a preſumptive Dependence upon Men, without true regard to Conviction or Perſwaſion. And therefore it is evident, that the drift of the Adverſaries, in ſuggeſting this ſlander, is to prejudice unwary Readers againſt Friends, by miſleading them into a wrong apprehenſion, that Friends endeavour to draw them from the Divine Grace, and holy Spirit in themſelves, to a dependence on men, to act according as men ſhall direct them, without true regard to Conviction or Perſwaſion in themſelves. But this is a foul ſlander upon Friends, and a groſs abuſe to the Readers: for indeed, the contrary hereof is moſt true. Friends as they have always done, ſo now, as much as ever, do direct all to the *heavenly Gift*, the *ſaving Grace* that hath appeared, the *manifeſtation of the Spirit in themſelves*, of it to learn, and on it *to depend*, for both Conviction and Conduct in their Religious Performances. But, as on the one hand, they labour to bring every one to an acquaintance with this heavenly Gift in themſelves, and a true dependence on it for Guidence by it: So, on the other

hand, they caution all to beware, that they be not beguiled by the Enemy in themſelves, (who forms Likeneſſes of heavenly things, on purpoſe to deceive and miſlead thereby, and for the ſame end *transforms himſelf into an Angel of Light*,) and take him for their Guide and Leader, as too many have done, inſtead of the Spirit of Truth; and then demand to be *left to the Grace of God in themſelves*, when indeed they are *gone from the Grace of God in themſelves*, and oppoſe the manifeſtations, operations, and productions thereof in others. So that the Controverſy (rightly ſtated, and truly conſidered) is not about being left, or not left, to the Grace of God (for that all ſhould be left to that, was never doubted, much leſs denyed, by Friends) but about being left, or not left, to that which is pretended to be the Grace of God, but indeed and in truth is not it; and by the fruits it brings forth ſufficiently manifeſts, that it is not it.

They ſay, *'tis true, to plead this againſt our underſtanding is an abuſe of the Plea, and is little better than Hereſie, but none can be an Heretick that truly fears God; therefore, to plead this againſt this or that thing, brought in by this or that Man, or by this or that Aſſembly, that we believe is wrong, is ſo far from abuſing the Plea, that it may be a true uſing of it.*

Rep. This is a very looſe and trifling way of arguing, having nothing cogent or concluſive in it. The Paſſage they oppoſe is this, *To plead being left to the Grace of God againſt Unity, is to abuſe the very Plea.* This was grounded upon, and drawn from an undenyed Propoſition, that where all are left with the one Spirit of Truth, they muſt be of one mind, they can't be otherwiſe. Now from this Propoſition, that All who are left with (that is, led by) the one Spirit of Truth, muſt be of one mind, it fairly and naturally follows, that for any to plead a being left to the Grace of God, and led by the Spirit of God in themſelves, in order to countenance or defend a being of a *contrary*, oppoſite mind from the reſt that are led by the Spirit of God, is to abuſe the Plea; and to commit (as the Author of the Examination there ſays) the greateſt Contradiction to that very Doctrine of Scripture, *viz.* that all ſhould be guided by the Grace and Spirit of God in themſelves: for the End of that Doctrine is Certainty; which the Author there confirms by ſeveral Scripture-Evidences, as *Jer.* 32. 39. *Ezek.* 11. 19.

Acts

Acts 4. 32. *&c.* This the Adverſaries do not attempt to anſwer; but turn the matter from pleading this againſt Unity, to pleading it againſt Underſtanding, which, they ſay, is little better than Hereſie, and grant that to do thus is an abuſe of the Plea. But can nothing be an abuſe of the Plea, but uſing it againſt Underſtanding? What if any have *ſo little* underſtanding in the things of God, as to believe that God's People may be led by the one Spirit of Truth to diſagree, act contrary to, and oppoſe one another in the things of God (as the Adverſaries ſay, in their 16th page, There is no neceſſity that they muſt agree in things Circumſtantial:) is not this to abuſe the Plea, though it ſhould not be done againſt Underſtanding, but *for want of Underſtanding*? For the Plea of being left to the Grace of God in ones ſelf, is therefore ſaid to be abuſed, becauſe uſed to an End and purpoſe directly contrary to that, for which it was given. For the end for which it was given is to bring men into Unity, both with God (from whom the Devil, by Tranſgreſſion, divided them) and with one another in the things of God, in whom is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning. And therefore to plead being led by it, out of Unity, and againſt Unity, is to abuſe the very Plea. And ſurely, if they go not againſt their Underſtandings, they go much *without Underſtanding*, in concluding, that becauſe it is an abuſe of the Plea to plead this againſt Underſtanding, *therefore* (for ſo they infer) *to plead this againſt this or that thing, brought in by this or that man, or by this or that Aſſembly, that we believe is wrong, is ſo far from abuſing the Plea, that it may be a true uſing of it.* For here is not only no Coherence between their Premiſes and Concluſion: but a plain departing from the terms of the Propoſition; which was a Pleading this (of being left to the Grace of God in themſelves) againſt *Unity*. Which word they wholly leave out, and inſtead thereof put in [*to plead this againſt this or that thing, brought in by this or that man, &c.*] This ſhews their ſhuffling, and idle way of arguing. However, we deny that any thing, believed or practiſed as a Religious Duty among us, was brought in by any man or men, as men, but by the Spirit of the Lord, opening Counſel in the hearts of his Servants, and through them recommending the uſe of ſuch things to the Church of Chriſt; and opening the hearts of ſuch as waited ſingly in the ſame Spirit of Truth, to receive, cloſe and joyn with the ſame,

from

from an inward ſenſe, Conviction and Perſwaſion that the things ſo recommended were of God: In which we have been, and are, abundantly confirmed, by the ſweet and powerful preſence of the Lord with and amongſt us in the uſe thereof, evidencing to our Spirits his accepting us therein. And if the Adverſaries believe thoſe things to be wrong, that doth not prove they are wrong; though it may prove their belief and themſelves wrong.

In their 21th page, They quote another paſſage out of the ſaid Book, in theſe words; "I muſt ſay unto thee, Friend, what if thou wilt not be left unto the Grace and Spirit of God in thy ſelf? (Here they break off with an, &c. omitting the reſt of the Sentence, which in the ſaid Book follows thus,) "nor wait for its "mind, nor be watchful to its Revelations, nor humble and quiet "till thou haſt received ſuch neceſſary manifeſtations, but pleadeſt "againſt the Counſel of the Spirit of the Lord in other faithful Per-"ſons, under the pretence of being left to his Spirit in thy ſelf; by "which means thou oppoſeſt the Spirit to the Spirit, and pleadeſt "for diſunity under the name of Liberty. Their Anſwer is, *Then ſuch do the thing that is extreamly Evil.*

Rep. No doubt of that. But when they do ſo, what is to be done in the caſe? Are they to be left to their Liberty and Freedom in doing the thing that is *extreamly Evil?* Is the Church bound to own them, receive them, acknowledge and admit them, not only for Members, but Miniſters and Preachers, while they are doing the thing that is ſo *extreamly Evil*? Or in caſe they diſturb her godly Care and Practice, and grow Contentious, and exalt their Judgment againſt her, (as the Adverſaries have done,) hath ſhe power from God to exhort, admoniſh and reprove them, and (if they perſevere therein) in his Name to refuſe any further fellowſhip with them, till they repent of their Evil, as, in the 10. *pag.* of the Book they pretend to Anſwer, is laid down, but not taken up, anſwered, or taken notice of by them, that I find.

Having nimbly anſwered to the former Quotation, *Then ſuch do the thing that is extreamly evil*; they immediately add, *but on the other hand, what if they are left with the Grace and Spirit of God, which they may, or at leaſt ſome; for any thing that he hath ſaid.*

Rep. May they ſo? That's ſtrange! They that will *not wait* for the

the mind of God's Spirit, nor be watchful to its Revelations, nor humble and quiet till they have received such necessary Manifestations, but plead against the Counsel of the Spirit of the Lord in other faithful Persons, under the pretence of being left to his Spirit in themselves, and so oppose the Spirit to the Spirit, and plead for Disunity under the name of Liberty; may they for any thing that he hath said (who hath said all this here, and more elsewhere) be left with (that is led by) the Grace and Spirit of God *in this?*

But say they, *What care has he taken? What remedy has he provided, that true Liberty and Freedom of Speech may be maintained?*

Rep. Let them shew, if they can, when or where true Liberty and Freedom of Speech hath been denied by Friends. That it hath been indeed by the Adversaries, may be proved, if need require. But it may well be supposed what sort of Liberty and Freedom of Speech they would maintain, by the *Licencious* Liberty they have taken, and used in speaking of, and against such Persons and things, as they dislike: a Liberty to *rail* at and *revile* those whom they call their Brethren, under the Names of *Apostates*, *Innovators*, *Introducers of Popery*, *Setters up of Images*, *Idolaters*, *Idol Prophets*, *a treacherous Company*, &c. a Liberty to *mock* at *scoff*, *jear* and *deride* the order and discipline of the Church of Christ, under the contemptuous names of *Canons*, *Constitutions*, *human-Prescriptions*, *Mens-Inventions*, *Edicts*, *Bulls*, &c. This is the Liberty and Freedom they have hitherto used, both in speaking and writing; how true, and fit to be maintained, let all, that live in Truth, judge.

To the Author's Question, whether he may not exhort to the practice of what he is moved to press to the practice of; they Answer, *We grant he may*, &c. Adding, *It's not our Duty to obey him, because he says it, but because we know, or at least are perswaded, that what he says is true*, page 22.

Rep. Neither that Author, nor any Friend besides, ever exhorted or desired (much less pressed as a Duty on any) to obey him, or to do any thing of a Religious concern, because he said it; but have alwayes directed to that which would give every one a certain knowledge, and Perswasion of the thing so exhorted to. There was therefore no need for the Adversaries to fence themselves against that which

which was never offered them. But they delight, by ſuch ſuggeſtions, to inſinuate evil ſurmiſes into the minds of their beguiled Proſelites.

In their 22. pag. They quibble upon the words [Common, and Univerſal:] for citing theſe words out of the Book they pretend to Anſwer, viz. *But therefore are not the Members of one mind and Judgement, in common and univerſal matters, relating to the Church of God?* They anſwer, *There is not much doubt in this when truly underſtood; but we are to mind,* ſay they, *that we be not deceived and impoſed upon, as to what is, or ought to be accounted common and univerſal matters.* Hereupon they give us their notion thereof, both affirmatively and negatively, thus; *By common and univerſal matters we underſtand (and we hope,* ſay they, *according to Truth) what has been commonly and univerſally received, and not new and novel things that have not been ſo received.*

Rep. This is not according to Truth, which is free and illimitable; whereas this would lay a Limit and Reſtraint upon God, from opening the way of Truth and Righteouſneſs further and further, and from adding ſuch helps and means for the Propagation thereof, and preſervation of his People therein, as he in his unſearchable Wiſdom ſhall ſee need of: For every freſh Diſcovery may on this pretence be ſlighted, rejected as a *Novelty*, in the ſame Spirit wherein the World rejects the whole way of Truth as a Novelty. Common and Univerſal matters therefore, relating to the Church of God, are not to be reſtrained to ſuch things as have been commonly and univerſally received. For the envious Seeds-Man was not backward to ſow his evil Seed *betimes*; and Captious Spirits have riſen up *early* (as well as now of late) excepting againſt, ſome one, ſome an other thing, in Doctrine or Practice, yet pretending to own the Fundamental principle of Truth. So that the moſt approved practice amongſt Friends may, perhaps, fall ſhort of having been, in a ſtrict Senſe, Univerſally received: For Univerſal admits no Exception. But by Common and Univerſal matters, relating to the Church of God, are to be underſtood matters of Common and Univerſal *Uſe* and *Service* in the Church of God; things not peculiar to this, that, or to'ther Member only, but of common uſe or benefit to all the Members of the Body. And that the Author ſo meant it, his own words plainly ſhew, *page* 5. Where he

ſays, *Degree or Meaſure in the ſame Life can never contradict or obſtruct that which is from the ſame Life, for the* common benefit *of the Family of God.* Did *Jude* call the Salvation he writ of verſe 3. *Common*, becauſe it was commonly received; or becauſe it was offered, intended and tendred as a *Common Benifit* to all that would receive it? And whereas the Adverſaries ſay, *This of Conviction and Perſwaſion preceding Conformity, hath been a Common* and *Univerſal matter or thing, becauſe commonly and univerſally received among us as a great Truth.*

I Reply, It is indeed a great Truth, and hath been, and is, a common and univerſal Matter; but not for the cauſe or reaſon they aſſign: For if it had not been commonly and univerſally received among us, as a great Truth; yet it would have been a common and univerſal Matter, relating to the Church of God, becauſe it is a Matter of common and univerſal Service and Benefit to all and every Member in the Church of God. But ſince they here acknowledge that this Doctrine, of Conviction and Perſwaſion preceding Conformity, hath been commonly and *univerſally received* among us as a great Truth; they do ill to inſinuate (which too frequently they do,) that Friends would draw any to a Conformity to any thing before, or without, Conviction or Perſwaſion.

In their 23d page, They pick another piece of a Sentence out of the Book they pretend to Anſwer, which they ſet down thus, *What comes from the Light, Life and Spirit in one, is the ſame in Truth and Unity to the reſt, as if it riſe in themſelves. This is ſeen in our Aſſemblies every day, &c.* Now becauſe they dare not directly gainſay this, and yet are diſpoſed to wrangle, they pretend to know the Deſign of the Argument, and quarrel with that. *The Deſign*, they ſay, *of this Argument is to gain a dependance upon the Teachings of God, by Inſtruments, equal at leaſt to the Teaching of God, immediately by his Spirit, in our own hearts; and this* (they ſay) *how plauſible ſoever, is not according to the Truth, as 'tis in Jeſus.*

Rep. Their ſurmiſe in this Caſe is wrong and *Evil*, and therefore not according to Truth. That which they ſuggeſt to be the Deſign, was not the Deſign of that Argument (as they call it.) But the plain and true Deſign of it was to obviat an Objection, and cut off a *falſe Plea* for Diſunion and Diſcord, grounded upon variety of Meaſures, and diverſity of Gifts and Offices in the Body. For the

the Author. having put the Queſtion, *page* 4. *Are there not various Meaſures, diverſities of Gifts, and ſeveral Offices in the Body*? And having granted that there are, proves that that *variety* and *diverſity* of Meaſures, Gifts and Offices in the Body, adminiſters no ground for Diſunion, Diſcord or *Contrariety* amongſt the members of the Body; ſince it is a falſe way of Reaſoning to conclude *Diſcord* from *Diverſity*, *Contrariety* from *Variety*: which having illuſtrated by an Inſtance of the *various* Senſes in a natural Body, without any *Contrariety* flowing from that *variety*, he ſhews, *page* 5. That *Diverſity* of Gifts doth not infer *Diſagreement* in Senſe, nor *variety* of Offices *contrariety* in Judgment concerning thoſe Offices. Then having, from the concurrent Teſtimonies of the holy Scriptures, ſet forth the Unity of God, he infers that *the Light, Life and Spirit of God is at unity with it ſelf in all; and what comes from the Light, Life or Spirit in one, it is the ſame in Truth and Unity to the reſt, as if it riſe in themſelves.* For this he appealed to the daily experience of Friends in our Meetings, where the Living and ſenſible ones know, that what comes from the Light, Life or Spirit of God in any Friend that Miniſters, is felt, received, cloſed with and united to as Truth, by thoſe that in the ſame Light, Life and Spirit wait, as well as if it had aroſe in themſelves. this was the Deſign of the Author's words in that place, as is apparent to any that fairly reads them; and the Deſign was *good*. But the Deſign of the Adverſaries was *Evil*, in ſurmiſing another Deſign without ground, that they might *make an occaſion* for Cavilling. For they are fain to confeſs, that *there is no contrariety in the Spirit of God, no Contradiction in the Spirit's Teaching, being all for one and the ſame end, the good of Man, by the Salvation of his Soul.* Nay, they acknowledge, *There is ſo much Truth in what the Author hath ſaid, that when fairly ſtated, they are content it ſhould be as a Rule to meaſure the whole difference by.* And yet they ſpend about a couple of Pages in Carping at it. They ſay, *betwixt God's Teaching by Inſtruments, and Teaching immediately by his Spirit in our own hearts, there is this Diſtinction or Difference, that the firſt is but to prepare, the latter to perfect.* Whereas the Scripture ſaith expreſly, *When Chriſt aſcended up on high, he gave gifts unto Men, ſome, Apoſtles; and ſome, Prophets; and ſome, Evangeliſts, and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, &c.* Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12. So that hence it appears that the Teaching of God, through ſuch *Inſtruments* as he gives his heavenly Gifts unto, for the work of the

Miniſtry, hath a *further* tendency and Service, than *but* (or *only*) *to prepare*: for thoſe Gifts were given for the *Edifying* (that is, building up, or Eſtabliſhing) of the Body of Chriſt, and for the *Perfecting* of the Saints. This ſhews, the Adverſaries, for all their *high Notions* and fluttering Pretences, are ſhort of a right underſtanding, and to ſeek in the work of the Miniſtry, being ignorant of the true and full end of Divine Miniſterial Gifts. So again they ſay, *page* 23. *When the things of God do come from God's holy Spirit immediately, they are then as the Oracles of God.* this ſhews they do not reckon them as the Oracles of God, if they come from the Light, Life, or Spirit of God through Inſtruments. But the Apoſtle *Peter* (who knew as much as they, and is fitter to be believed than they) ſaith, *If any Man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the Oracles of God, &c.* 1 *Pet.* 4. 11. So that the Apoſtle, it ſeems, underſtood no other, but that the things of God, when Miniſtred as of the ability which God giveth, were as *the Oracles of God*, though ſpoken by or through Man.

To make way yet for more wrangling, they reaſon after this manner; *either* ſay they, *all that do ſpeak in our Aſſemblies or Meetings, ſpeak from the Light, Life and Spirit, or all do not, if all do ſo ſpeak, prove it; if all do not ſo ſpeak, then you muſt give us a certain Rule to know who do ſo ſpeak and who do not.*

Rep. At the end of their Preface, they give an Advertiſement, that where the Term **You** is found in the following Diſcourſe, (namely in their Book) they intend the Author (*viz.* of the Book they pretend to Anſwer) and thoſe of his mind. And where the term **We** is alſo uſed (in their Book) it may be underſtood in reſpect to thoſe of the ſame mind with the Author of that Book of theirs. So that **You** and **We** are there ſet for Characteriſtical Notes, or diſtinguiſhing Terms, between Friends and them; Friends being intended and denoted by the word **You**, and themſelves by the word **We**. Now ſince **Your** and **Our** are but Derivatives from **You** and **We**, each ought to follow its own Primitive. And ſince by the term **We**, they would have themſelves to be underſtood, it is but reaſon that by the term **Our** Aſſemblies or Meetings, their own Aſſemblies or Meetings ſhould be underſtood, not the Aſſemblies or Meetings of Friends: eſpecially, ſeeing *they have Meetings of their own*, properly their own, *ſet up by themſelves*, in

in their own wills and choice, in a Spirit of ſeparation from the Meetings of Friends, and in oppoſition to them. Now, if we take them in this Senſe, when they ſay as before, Either all that do ſpeak in Our Aſſemblies or Meetings, ſpeak from the Light, Life and Spirit, or all do not; I ſhall eaſily grant, what they ſay they take for granted, that all that ſpeak in their Aſſemblies or Meetings, do not ſpeak from the Light, Life and Spirit of God, if any do. But if they miſtook themſelves here, and by Our Aſſemblies or Meetings, intended the Aſſemblies or Meetings of Friends, and ſo put the Queſtion, whether all that ſpeak in the Meetings of Friends, do ſpeak from the Light, Life and Spirit of God, or not.

I Reply, No: For many of the Adverſaries themſelves (who are gone into a *wicked* ſeparation from Friends, and inſtead of abideing in the Light, Life and Spirit of God, are got into an *ungodly* Spirit of Wrangling and Quarrelling, Rayling and Reviling, Envy, Bitterneſs and Reſtleſs Contention) do notwithſtanding thruſt into Friends Meetings, and there take upon them to ſpeak, though they (or their Party) have openly denyed Friends in Print. This is ſuch *a work of darkneſs* and *horrible Hypocryſie*, as manifeſts that ſuch ſpeak not from the Light, Life or Spirit of God. But whereas they ſay, *You muſt give us a certain Rule to know who do ſo ſpeak, and who do not, or otherwiſe you muſt leave us to receive or refuſe, according to the beſt of our underſtanding*; (which they repeat over and over, biding us) *Obſerve, either you muſt give us a Rule as above, or you muſt leave us free, &c.* I Reply, Friends have always directed and left them, and all others, to that which makes *free indeed*, the Truth, *John* 8. 32. And their inſinuating the contrary, is a foul Slander, and a wicked Deſign. I would to God they, who are run into Enmity to and ſeparation from Friends, would leave us free, and not impoſe upon us their Preaching and Praying, which they have been often told Friends cannot receive or own. And whereas they ſay, both here in *page* 24. and elſewhere, *We take it for granted, that you can give no ſuch Rule.*

I Reply, They miſtake, taking that for granted which they ought not. That Light, Life, Spirit, Grace or Truth, which Friends have always directed them and all unto, is a Rule. a certain Rule, to know who ſpeak from it, and who do not. And they that abide in it, and are attentive to it, do know who ſpeak from it, and who do

do not; who are acted by it, and who are not: and know accordingly what, and whom, to receive, and what, and whom, to refuse. For the true Sheep know the true Shepherd's *Voice*, *John* 10. 4. and 27. which is more than words. But there is a difference between being left to this Light, Grace or Spirit of God in ourselves, to receive or refuse according to that; and being left to our own understanding, to receive or refuse according to the best of that, as the Adversaries would be left. For Man's understanding, as it is a natural Faculty, must be illuminated by this heavenly Light and Spirit of God, before it can receive, or know, the things of God, because *they are Spiritually discerned*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. Well therefore did the Wise-man advise, *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding*, Prov. 3. 5.

In the close of their 24 *page*, They say, *We may safely conclude, where Conviction and Persuasion are disallowed, that Government ceaseth to be true.*

Rep. But where is that? not amongst Friends, I am sure. This they have suggested over and over; but without proof, without colour. The contrary has been asserted and proved over and over, again and again, and that by undenyable Evidences, from that very Book they pretend to Answer; As *thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly*, page 3. *The People of God ought to be left to the Guidings of the Spirit of God in themselves*, page 9. *It is a great Truth that all are to be left thereunto*, ibid. And again, *If thou dost not presently see that Service in a thing, that the rest of thy Brethren agree in, it is thy Duty* (what to do? not to Conform without or against Conviction or Persuasion, but) *to wait upon God in silence and patience, out of all fleshly Consultations, &c.* page 10. These plain Testimonies, one would think, were enough to stop the clamorous mouth of slanderous Envy.

They begin their 25th *page* with a Passage, which they single out of the 6th *page* of the Book they pretend to Answer; And they word it thus, *They that walk in the Light, have Fellowship one with another*, 1 *John* 1. *Whence he saith, 'tis easy to conclude, that those that go out of Fellowship, go out of the Light, &c.* Upon this they spend about four pages in meer Cavilling. And to make the more way for their Cavilling, they *miscite* the Passage, leaving out a word of *small sound*, but of *great force* in the present Case, because a strong

Emphasis

Emphasis lies upon it. For whereas the Author's words were, they that go out of [*the*] Fellowship, go out of the Light; the Adversaries, omitting the word [*the*] report him to have said, *They that go out of Fellowship, go out of the Light*; By that means, making themselves a liberty to extend this *to any sort* of Fellowship, that they have a mind to stretch it to, which was spoken Emphatically, and by way of Excellency, of that *Divine* and *Spiritual* Fellowship, which is attained only *by walking in the Light*. Nor was this a single slip, or oversight; but seven or eight times over have they here repeated this Passage in the same Terms, and with the same Omission: and have made advantage of it accordingly, to prevent the Sense, abuse the Author, and beguil the Reader. For in their 26th *page*. They put themselves upon the Inquiry, *What must be understood by the word Fellowship*; *for*, they say, *it cannot stand of it self* (it seems they take it for a *Noun Adjective*) and they have taken from it that, by which it might have both stood, and been understood. They pursue their Inquiry thus; *Therefore*, say they, *to make it intelligible in the best Sense, we must joyn to it what he calls the Church, and then* (add they) *that Church must relate to People, and at last* (say they) *we judge, it must relate to those Orders, Rules and Forms, that are set up by this Church, &c.* Thus have they *taken away* what they pleased from the Author's words, and *added* to them of their own, that they might the more foully pervert the Sense and meaning of them.

Whereas the Author's words, [They that go out of the Fellowship, go out of the Light,] had a direct and limitted relation *to that Fellowship* which stands in the Light, which they that walk in the Light have one with another, in and by walking in the Light. So that the true Fellowship here treated of, is a pure, holy, Spiritual Fellowship, which God's People have and enjoy one with another; and their Fellowship one with another stands in that wherein their Fellowship stands with God; not in any Ceremonial or shadowy thing, as the Adversaries, with an evil mind, suggest.

They say, *page* 25, *We may see the cunning that is in Daubing, as well as something of that ground of the false Reasoning, that is among the Children of men.* Their *Daubing*, and their *Cunning* is laid open in the foregoing. Their *false Reasoning*, and their *Folly* will appear in what follows. They tell us, *page* 25, *Every saying or Position hath only one other Saying or Position that stands against it; if therefore*

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(ſay they) *what is brought as the Antitheſis, differ from the direct oppoſite Senſe, the work that follows, or what is builded upon it, cannot be true.*

Rep. This is ſo oppoſite to Senſe, that it is hard to pick any Senſe out of it. *Antitheſis* is a Poſition directly contrary to another Poſition, which is the *Theſis* to it; and it muſt differ from the *Theſis*, or direct oppoſite Senſe, which it is brought againſt, elſe it is not truly *Antitheſis*: Yet they would have it, that if it do differ from the direct oppoſite Senſe, it cannot be true. They have got hold of a *Cramp-word* (as the ſaying is) and ſeem very fond of it; but handle it with ſo *little skill*, as ſhews they do not rightly underſtand it: For they confound *Theſis* with *Antitheſis*, making the ſame words ſometimes one, ſome times to'ther; not conſidering that themſelves at the ſame time ſay, *Oppoſites remain as fixt in their Senſe, as the Eaſt doth from the Weſt.* Then ſure they are not Convertible. Yet they make thoſe words, [*They that go out of Fellowſhip, go out of the Light,*] one while a *Theſis* or Poſition; another while an *Antitheſis*, which is quite contrary. Again, they ſay, *This Poſition, that they that go out of Fellowſhip, go out of the Light, he brings as the true Antitheſis to this Poſition of Scripture, quoted* 1 John 1. *or he doth not ſo bring it; if he doth not bring it as true, he deceives or abuſes his Reader, but if he doth bring it as the true Antitheſis, he is miſtaken.*

Rep. What ground had they to *dream* that he brought it as an *Antitheſis* at all? He no where calls it ſo: Nay, he directly calls it a *Concluſion*, (his words are, *Whence it is eaſy to conclude, They that go out of the Fellowſhip, go out of the Light:*) And cannot they diſcern between a *Concluſion* and an *Antitheſis?* They had better then not have medled with either. Is every *Concluſion* an *Antitheſis*, do they think? They ſay, *He brings it as the true Antitheſis, or he doth not ſo bring it; if he doth not bring it as true, he deceives or abuſes his Reader.* Here, to ſhew their *Cunning* in *Danbing*, they leave out the word *Antitheſis* in the latter Clauſe of the Sentence, and only ſay; if he doth not bring it *as true*, he deceives or abuſes his Reader. But he doth bring it *as true* (though not *Antitheſis*, but) *Concluſion* from the Premiſes; ſo that they deceive themſelves and their Readers, and abuſe him. They grant, from the Text in *John*, that *The ground and cauſe of true Fellowſhip, is a walking in the Light.* And it is very evident, that it was this true Fellowſhip, which walking in

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the Light is the Ground and Cauſe of, that the Author ſpake of, whom he ſaid, *They that go out of the Fellowſhip, go out of the Light*, becauſe he inferr'd it from having Fellowſhip by walking in the Light, aſſerted by the Apoſtle, 1 *John* 1. Now therefore, after all their wrangling, and idle Cavilling about it, I deſire they will ſeriouſly conſider, whether they that go out of this true Fellowſhip, which ſtands in the Light, which is attained only by walking in the Light, or which (as their own phraſe is) walking in the Light is the ground and cauſe of, do not go out of the Light in which the Fellowſhip ſtands, when they go out of the Fellowſhip which ſtands in the Light.

They ſay, *The proof that the work is true, is the witneſs in a Man's own mind by the cleanſing from all Sin*; and they add, *without this, Fellowſhip is ineffectual.*

Rep. I grant that Cleanſing, being an effect of walking in the Light, is a good proof of ſuch walking. But ſince Cleanſing is a gradual work: (for as, *Nemo repentè fit Turpiſſimus*; So *Nemo repente fit Purgatiſſimus*: As no Man becomes moſt filthy all on a ſudden; ſo neither is it uſual for any one to be made throughly Clean in a moment:) Cleanſing *from all ſin* is the higheſt degree of Cleanſing. Now though the further this work of Cleanſing is carried on, the more ſweet and precious the Fellowſhip is; yet to aſſert (as the Adverſaries here do) that *without cleanſing from all Sin, this Fellowſhip is ineffectual*, is an Error. For while the work of Cleanſing is but *in part* wrought, and is *carrying on* from one degree to an other, this holy Fellowſhip is of *good effect* to them, who by walking in the Light, are brought into, and preſerved in it. I find the Author of the Book I am Replying to, doth *not weigh* his matter in the true Ballance before he brings it forth; but runs on in a *dark* way of *natural* Reaſoning (wherein his greateſt ſtrength ſeems to lye) which leads him to lay hold too ſuddenly of *Crude* and indigeſted *Notions*, which will not ſtand, when brought to the true Tryal. But to manifeſt more directly to him and his Party, their miſtake in the preſent Inſtance, I recommend to their Conſideration, whether they, among themſelves, have, or pretend to have, any Fellowſhip one with another, or no. If they have; whether *All* in that Fellowſhip can in truth ſay, they are cleanſed from *All* Sin. If they cannot; then whether (according to their own Poſition be-

fore laid down) that Fellowſhip of theirs is not *ineffectual*. This concerns all them that value that Fellowſhip, or themſelves for being in it, to conſider.

In their 27th and 28th *pages*, having ſpoken of the Church's going into the Wilderneſs, and of her being led out of it again by Chriſt, they ſay, *As we believe there is to be no end of the Increaſe of his Government now begun, we are to conſider there is ſome alteration in the work; it then decreaſed, it muſt now increaſe, and if it muſt increaſe, we may well conſider, as God is infinite and eternal, he hath ſtill more Wiſdom, Power and Glory to reveal.*

Rep. There is no doubt but he hath: And in his Wiſdom he hath revealed ſuch things, as his Wiſdom ſaw needful and uſeful to his Church and People, which by his glorious Power he hath confirmed them in; And which the Adverſaries, in *their carnal Wiſdom*, judging too mean and low for them to receive, have deſpiſed, reproached, rejected and oppoſed. But while they here admit, that God hath ſtill more Wiſdom, Power and Glory to reveal, they ſeem to have forgotten how oft throughout their Book, they have ſcornfully rejected things as *New* and *Novel*, and bounded all to their beginning.

Again they ſay, *there muſt be a looking forward, and not backward for the mind of Chriſt.*

Rep. Why then would they limit us to their beginning, as in their 5th and 9th *pages*, as if nothing were to be received, but what is (in their eſteem) Eſſential to true Religion, or which hath been *from their beginning*? Is not that looking *backward*, inſtead of forward? Beſides, if there muſt be a looking forward, and *not backward* (as they ſay) for the mind of Chriſt; why then do they twit us with *unſcriptural* Orders, and peremptorily call for a plain *Scripture Proof* for this or that Practice? Is not this looking *backward*, inſtead of forward? For the Scriptures, they know, were written many hundred years ago. Thus their weakneſs and ſelf Contradiction appears. But this is not all. Their Poſition is *unſound* in it ſelf. They ſay, there muſt be a looking forward, and *not backward* for the mind of Chriſt. This Negative part of their Poſition is falſe and Erronious, excluding the Scriptures of Truth to be looked in for the mind of Chriſt. Herein they Err to one Extream, as the World's People do to the other. They are for looking backward,

ward, *not forward*, for the mind of Christ; *backward* to the Scriptures, which they call such a compleat Canon, as admits no Addition, or further discovery of the mind of God; *not forward*, as believing God hath so bound himself up to what is revealed in the holy Scripture, that he will not reveal his mind any further. These, on the other hand, are for looking forward, *not backward*, for the mind of Christ. The Truth lies between these two Extreams. There ought to be a looking both forward, and backward, for the minde of Christ. *not only forward*, to every fresh and further manifestation, discovery or Revelation of his minde: *but also backward*, to those Revelations, discoveries or manifestations of the minde of Christ, which we have already received from him in our selves, and which the Church of Christ in Ages past received from him, through the holy Spirit, and are recorded in the holy Scriptures, which were written for our Instruction. Thus running on headily and in haste, the Adversaries have shut out the use and Service of the Scriptures of Truth, from being look'd into for the minde of Christ.

They say, *We should not think by what we know, to measure what is to come*; and they add, *we hereby limit the holy One as much as is in our power*, &c.

Rep. They directed us before, at the end of their Preface, to understand the term [*We*] of those that are of the same minde with the Author of their Book. Now this which they here say, of limitting the holy One, &c. They speak in the term [*We.*] So that this is applicable to themselves, by their own direction. I am sensible indeed, that what they here speak concerning themselves, is true; and I am sorry for it: for hence has proceeded *their hurt, and the loss that is come upon them.* They have measured the Lord's Appearances by the *false Measure* of their own *conceited Knowledge*, and the things they so measured not answering their expectation by that measure, they have rejected, despised and vilified the things themselves, blasphemed the Power which led Friends into the practice of them, turn'd head against their Brethren, disquieted and disturbed the Church of Christ, proclaimed in Print open War, and set up their separate Meetings, as Ensigns and Standards thereof.

Their 29th *page* contains a Quotation out of the Book they pretend to Anſwer. It is too long to tranſcribe (being almoſt a page) conſiſting of many particulars, pickt out of the 6th and 8th pages of that Book, but *not fairly*: for, beſides other Variations, there is this material one, that whereas the Author's own words are, *If I will not comply with him that God hath made an Eye, &c.* They have cited it, *If I will not comply with him that is made an Eye, &c.* leaving out *God*, that they might make room for an evil minde to ſurmiſe, that the Eye there ſpoken of might be of *Man*'s making, not of God's; though the Author had expreſly ſaid, *Him that GOD hath made an Eye* This ſhews (as they elſewhere reflect, *page* 25th) more *Cunning* in *Daubing*, than *honeſty* in *Dealing*. In their Anſwer they ſay, *'tis plain the Author intended to gain a dependance upon what he calls the Church.*

Rep. 'Tis plain they herein *abuſe* the Author, and endeavour to miſlead their Reader. 'Tis plain the Author had no intention, nor doth his Diſcourſe tend, to gain a dependence upon the Church, or upon any thing elſe than what the Church it ſelf is built and depends upon, Chriſt Jeſus, the Head thereof. That which they Carp at is a Scripture-Metaphor, borrowed from the Apoſtle *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 12. And the Author's intention in uſing it was no other, than to reprove, and refute the folly of thoſe, who from the *variety* of Meaſures, *diverſity* of Gifts and Offices in the Spiritual Body, would infer, and bring in a Liberty and allowance for the members of that Body to *diſagree* among themſelves, to *contradict* and *oppoſe* each other, in and about the ſelf ſame matter and thing, relating to the Family or Church of God. That this was his Intention, appears moſt plainly in his 4th *page*. Now in order to convince ſuch of the weakneſs, unreaſonableneſs, and falſeneſs of that Plea, he uſed the Compariſon which the Apoſtle had made, drawn from a natural Body, wherein, notwithſtanding there are divers Members, and various Offices to which they are adapted, yet is there *no diſagreement* among them, *no Contrariety*, Contradiction, or Oppoſition. So that the Adverſaries, in this Cavil, do but in effect carp at the Apoſtle, at the Holy Scripture, and at the Spirit of Truth by which it was written. But I come to particulars of their Anſwer.

Having ſaid, 'tis plain his intention is to gain a Dependance upon what he calls the Church, they add, *And that he makes infallible as ſhe relates to Men.* *Rep.*

Rep. This is a notorious Falſehood, not to be faſtned on any thing in his Book; and that I ſuppoſe, they were ſenſible of: for they do not attempt to quote any paſſage of his in proof of it, but endeavour to prop up this, by ſetting another Falſehood to it, which is this; *That ſhe muſt relate to Men is clear, the Difference* (ſay they) *being betwixt Men and Men.* This is falſe as well as the former. The Difference is not betwixt Men and Men; if it were, it would relate to the things of Men, ſuch things as are common to Men *as Men.* But the Difference is between Spirit and Spirit, and relates to the things of the Church, not of the World; of Chriſtians, not of Men *as Men.* But the Adverſaries, in their *carnal minds*, diſtinguiſh not between Men and Chriſtians. Next they ſay, *He makes no proviſion in all his Book to the contrary, by allowing Conviction to precede Conformity.*

Rep. Doubtleſs the Adverſaries are come to an high degree of obſtinate hardneſs, that without remorſe they can ſo often repeat ſo foul a Falſehood as this. How many places have I already cited out of that Book (in which, they ſay, he makes no proviſion at all for this) which plainly convict them of Falſehood and Slander therein! when he ſaid, *page* 3. *Thou art not to conform to a thing ignorantly*; was here no Proviſion at all made for Conviction to precede Conformity! If they were not to conform *ignorantly*, then ſurely they were to know, be perſwaded, convinced, before they conformed. So that here was a good proviſion made, that Conviction ſhould precede Conformity. When, to the Queſtion, [Ought I not to be left to the Grace and Spirit of God in my own heart,] He Anſwered, *Yea, that is of all things moſt deſireable, &c. page* 3. and 4. when he ſaid, *page* 9. *The People of God ought to be left to the Guidings of the Spirit of God in themſelves*; and again, *It is a great Truth that all are to be thereunto left*; was here no Proviſion at all for Conviction to precede Conformity! what better Proviſion could have been made for allowing Conviction to precede Conformity, than to declare that God's People ought to be left to the Guidings of God's Spirit in themſelves? Is it not from the Spirit of God in ones ſelf, that Conviction or Perſwaſion of Duty is to be accepted and received? will the Spirit of God lead them that are left to the Guidings of it, to Conformity before Conviction? no ſure. The leaving therefore of God's People to the Guidings of

God's

God's Spirit in themſelves, was the beſt Proviſion could have been made for Conviction to precede Conformity. When, to the Queſtion, [If I do not preſently ſee that Service in a thing, that the reſt of my Brethren agree in, in this caſe what is my Duty?] He Anſwered, *It is thy Duty to wait upon God in ſilence and Patience, out of all fleſhly Conſultation, and as thou abideſt in the ſimplicity of Truth, thou wilt receive an underſtanding with the reſt of thy Brethren about the thing doubted*; was there no Proviſion at all here, for allowing Conviction to precede Conformity! Did he ſay, thou muſt Conform before or without Coviction? whether thou ſeeſt the Service, or no? Whether thou haſt received an Underſtanding about it, or no? Nay, did he not poſitively exclude that, and obviate this Cavil, by ſaying directly, *It is thy Duty to waite upon God, &c.* And what was ſuch an one to wait upon God for? to be lead into Conformity before Conviction? no ſure; but to receive Conviction from God: therefore he there added, *And as thou abideſt in the ſimplicity of Truth, thou wilt receive an Underſtanding, &c.* Nay, ſo far was he from favouring (much more from preſſing) Conformity before Conviction, that, having declared, as before, the Duty of ſuch an unconvinced, doubting one; he adds alſo, what is the Duty of the Brethren towards ſuch an one, thus, *And it is their Duty, whilſt thou behaveſt thy ſelf in meekneſs and humility, to bear with thee, and carry themſelves tenderly and lovingly towards thee.* Can any be ſo impudent as yet to ſay, that he makes no Proviſion in all his Book to the contrary, by allowing Conviction to precede Conformity! Nay, the Adverſaries themſelves ſay of him, *page* 16. That they believe he deſires *all ſhould be Guided by God's Spirit.* Doth this look like leading into blind Obedience, like drawing to Conformity before Conviction, like drawing to a Dependence upon Men, as they often ſuggeſt againſt him! how abominably wicked are they herein!

In their 30 *page*, they quarrel at ſome particular paſſages in the large Quotation they gave before, relating to the Metaphor of a natural Body. As firſt, they ſay, *The Author ſeems to make the Church immediately joyned to Chriſt for her Head, as the natural Body is joyned to the natural Head.*

Rep. Doth this offend them? It is then becauſe they do not know the true Church, nor her ſtrict Conjunction with or to her Head.

Do

Do they indeed think the true Church is not immediately joyned to Chriſt for her Head! were they of that Church, they would think otherwiſe. It concerns them to conſider, whether they are not ſuch as the Apoſtle complained of, *Col.* 2. 19. for *not holding the Head, from which all the body, by joynts and bands having nouriſhment miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the increaſe of God.* The ſame Apoſtle exhorting the *Epheſians* not to be *toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the ſlight of Men, and cunning Craftineſs, whereby they ly in wait to deceive*, Epheſ. 4. 14. adds, *But ſpeaking the Truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Chriſt: from whom the whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplyeth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the Body unto the edifying of it ſelf in love.* And *Beza*, on theſe words, thus noteth; *Thereof it followeth*, ſaith he, *that neither this Body can live without Chriſt, neither can any Man grow up Spiritually, that ſeparateth himſelf from the other Members.* A fit Note, and worthy to be noted by all thoſe, who have ſeparated themſelves from that Church, which yet they acknowledge to be true.

They Cavil yet further at the parts of the Metaphor taken from a natural Body, which ſhews they do not well underſtand the nature of a Metaphor, Compariſon, or Similc, which (as the ſaying is) runs not on all four, nor agrees in every particular; but it is enough if it ſquare in theſe parts, wherein the Compariſon lies. When Chriſt compared his Coming (called by the Apoſtles, the coming of the day of the Lord, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 2. and 2 *Pet.* 3. 10.) to the coming of a Theif, *Matth.* 24. 43, 44. it was *not* with reſpect to the *end* or intention of the coming of each: (for *the Thief cometh not but to ſteal, kill and deſtroy*, *John* 10. 10. Whereas Chriſt came to give Life, and to Save.) But it was with reſpect to the *unexpected ſuddenneſs* of the coming of each. The comparing the Members of Chriſt's Body to the Members of a natural Body, was not to tie the Spiritual Members to a *ſtrict* and *exact* proportion and agreement, in *every* reſpect, to the Members of a natural Body, in *all* and *ſingular* the Offices, Properties, Qualifications and Faculties of the Members of a natural Body: But to ſhew, that as all the Members of a natural Body, being influenced, animated and acted by one and the ſame vital Spirit, do harmoniouſly agree, and *not*

thwart

thwart one another, in their various Offices and Actions: So the Members of the true Spiritual Body, being all influenced, animated, acted, moved, led and guided by the one Spirit of Life and Truth, do harmoniously agree, and sweetly consent together, in the performing of their several Offices, according to the divers Gifts, and various Measures that they have received thereof. Which cuts off, and wholly excludes that pernicious Plea, which the dividing Enemy hath furnished some with, for maintaining Disagreement, Discord, and opposite Senses, Judgments and Practices, amongst the Members of the same Body, in and about the same Religious Performances. Had the Adversaries rightly considered this, they would not perhaps have thought there had been any inconsistency between the Church of Christ seeing, hearing, speaking with the same Eye, Ear, Mouth; and particular Members being made by God an Eye, Ear, or Mouth, at such seasons, or such occasions, and for such Services, as he sees meet to use them in: For there is no inconsistency in this at all; though they labour to make one, by *a carnal way of Reasoning*, not suitable to the nature of Spiritual Senses. For though they say, *In the first of these Cases, they all seem to hear for themselves; in the latter, some hear immediately, and some secondarily*; and that *the first hear not only for themselves, but for others also, the second only for themselves by others*: They err, not knowing the Mystery of true Spiritual Hearing. For in the true Church All (whose Ear the Lord hath truly opened, and who attentively listen to his Voice, hear for themselves, and that *immediately*, by the Spiritual Ear which God hath opened in them, at the same time that, with the outward Ear, they hear the Testimony of Truth sounded forth, by the Spirit of Truth, through any Instrument unto them. But, Oh! the darkness that comes over those, who give scope and liberty to their minds to rove, and range in the way of carnal Reasoning, about the things of God, which are, and only can be, Spiritually discerned, by them that wait in the Light. *Let us know*, say the Adversaries here, *what Member is this Eye that we must see by, and what Member is this Ear that we must hear by, and what Member is this Mouth that we must speak by, in those things that relate to Christ and his Church, that so we may not be imposed upon by such as may pretend to be that Eye, that Ear and Mouth, and are not.*

Rep.

Rep. This looks too like that *impertinent Curiosity*, which drew from the Apostle the Rebuke of [*thou Fool*] to him that asked, How are the Dead raised up? and with what Bodies do they come? 1 *Cor.* 15. 35, 36. The Adversaries here bewray an Imagination, that some particular Members are determinately appointed to the constant, and continual performance, and execution of those Offices of Eye, Ear, Mouth, *&c.* to and for the Body. And they seem to expect we should describe those Persons to them by name, or other outward Character. But how *carnally minded* must they be, that could conceive so strange an Imagination! They bid us let them know that, which none but God knows. For as no Member can be rightly a Mouth to the rest, but that which God makes so, by speaking through it to the rest, and that only at such times as it is so made use of by God: So none but God knows what Member he will make use of, as a Mouth to speak his mind by. But as all the Members wait upon God, in their own respective measures of the heavenly Gift in themselves, all are in their proper places, ready to be ordered and disposed of by the Lord to whatsoever Office in, or Service for the Body, he shall see meet to use them in. And every one thus truly waiting, in that which gives a true discerning, none such can be imposed upon by any false Pretender. Hence it is, that when any of these Adversaries (that are gone out of the Unity, into a separation inwardly in Spirit, and outwardly in Meetings also, from Friends) *thrust* into our Meetings, and take upon them to be a Mouth, either from God to the Assembly, by Preaching, or from the Assembly to God, by Prayer; they are savoured, felt, seen and known to be but false Pretenders; and as such rejected and denied by Friends. But is it not strange blindness in them, to Cavil at the Expression of a Member being made a Mouth by God to the rest of the Members; when it is plain matter of Fact, that divers of themselves pretend to that Office, of being a Mouth to or from the Assembly, and on that pretence obtrude and impose their Preaching and Praying on Friends! Does not this shew they are devoted to Cavilling?

They say, in their 31 *page*, *Will he leave us to depend, and not certainly tell us what on*?

Rep. By this they would insinuate, that the Author of the Book they pretend to Answer, would have some of the Members depend

upon others. Yet they immediately add, *He doth not intend that ſure.* But if they really believe he doth not intend that, why would they ſuggeſt that he doth ſo intend, by ſaying, will he have us to depend, and not *certainly* tell us what on? when it is certain he had certainly and expreſly told, what all God's People ought to depend on, namely, the Guidings of the Spirit of God in themſelves, *page* 9. And indeed, ſo far are Friends from having, or referring any to, a dependence on any Inſtrument, through which God at any time ſpake; that they have always recommended all to the Grace, and Spirit of God in themſelves, (which ſays *Amen* to the Teſtimony that proceeds from the ſame Grace and Spirit in another) that their dependence might be upon God in that. And had the Adverſaries look'd with an indifferent Eye, they might have obſerved what the Author, of the Book they are ſo angry at, hath written in the 8th and 9th *pages* thereof, *viz.* "That the ſame lowly frame "of mind that receives and anſwers the mind of the Spirit of the "Lord in a Man's ſelf, will receive and have Unity with the mind "of the ſame Spirit through another, and the reaſon is plain; "becauſe the ſame ſelf evidencing Power and virtue that ariſeth "from the meaſure of the Spirit of Truth in one ſelf, and that "convinceth a Man in his own heart, doth alſo attend the "diſcovery of the mind of the ſame Spirit, when delivered by "another.

They ſpeak of *the Church that is perfectly redeemed, &c. But this,* ſay they, *is that Church that is hid from the World.*

Rep. By this they would make as if Chriſt had two Churches, one hid from the World, and another known to the World. But is the Church (or was it ever) known to the World? Was not his Church always hid from the World? Can the Church of Chriſt be ſeen but by a Spiritual Eye? And hath the World that Eye to ſee her with?

In their 32 *page*, they ſay, *Why do you impoſe upon your Brethren?*

Rep. The Inſinuation is falſe and malicious. Friends impoſe not upon any. But what God hath manifeſted as his mind unto us, for the Service and good of his Church, that in his Fear we practice our ſelves, and that we have recommended to others. When ſome have ſaid, they ſaw not the Service of it, ſuch have been exhorted, and deſired, to wait upon God in the meaſure of his Light,

Grace

Grace and Spirit manifeſted in themſelves, that thereby they might come to a Sight and Senſe thereof, and have Unity with their Brethren therein; and in the mean time to be quiet, and not oppoſe thoſe things, which their Brethren were conſcientiouſly concerned in, and which they themſelves confeſſed that they had not a ſight, whether the things ſo recommended, were of God or not. But inſtead of taking this good Counſel, ſome Factious Spirits amongſt them, ſet themſelves to obſtruct and hinder Friends from proceeding, in the way which the Lord had led them into; working againſt Friends, at firſt, in a more hidden manner, by *ſly Inſinuations* and *evil Surmiſes* ſecretly conveyed from Houſe to Houſe, among ſuch as were *weak* of *Underſtanding*, or but *young* in the *Convincement* and knowledge of Truth, or under ſome *diſcontent* of mind, or ſuch as wanted a *broader* way than Truth allows. Theſe they ſmoothly and craftily inſinuated themſelves into, entertained them with Stories and falſe Reports againſt this, that and the other Friend, labouring to perſwade them that ſuch ſought to ſet up a *Lordly Dominion* over them, to make themſelves *Rulers* of the Church, and bring others in ſubjection under them: Than which, nothing could be more falſe. But after that thoſe wicked Agents had, by theſe and ſuch like ungodly Courſes, beguiled many, and formed to themſelves (as they thought) a ſufficient party in divers parts of the Nation; they then brake forth into open Oppoſition, gainſaying, withſtanding and diſturbing Friends in the practice of thoſe things, which Friends were convinced of, and ſatisfied the Lord had led them into, and owned them in; calling them (in ſcorn and deriſion) by the reproachful and deſpightful Terms of Canons, Conſtitutions, Decrees, Mens-Inventions, Human Traditions, Popiſh-Preſcriptions, Edicts, Orders, Bulls, *&c.* And when Friends, ſeeing them thus run out from Truth, and bandying together againſt Truth, could no longer receive their Teſtimonies in our publick Meetings, as Preachers amongſt us, but were neceſſitated to ſhew ſome open diſlike thereof; then did the Adverſaries *impoſe* their Preaching and Praying upon Friends, requiring Friends to bow in Conformity to their Prayers, and that not only *before* and *without*, but even *againſt* and *contrary* to Conviction and Perſwaſion, (for Friends gave them to underſtand that they were convinced and ſatisfied in their Judgments and Conſciences, that

they, being gone from the Spirit of Truth and Goſpel of Peace, ought not to be owned as Miniſters thereof.) Nay, to that height did the Adverſaries proceed, in *obtruding* their Miniſtry upon Friends, that (in ſome places, where they had gotten ſtrength, by Numbers, ſufficient to carry on their evil Deſigns,) they *impoſed Conformity* to their own Miniſtry, under an *outward Penalty*, and that no leſs than a being excluded from, debarred and deprived of the uſe of their publick Meeting-places, in which the Friends, ſo deprived, had, and have, a true Right and legal Property. Nor did they only threaten this, but were as bad as their words, and did actually ſhut and keep the Friends out, and refuſe them entrance into their own Meeting-places, unleſs they would firſt promiſe to conform. This was Impoſition with a witneſs: And *Reding* is a witneſs of this.

The Cavils they make in their 34. and 35. pages, on occaſion of the Differences mentioned, *Rom.* 14. about Obſervation of Meats and Days, are very trivial. They do not prove that the Inſtances of abſtaining from Meats, and obſerving Days, are Parallels to thoſe parts of Church-Diſcipline, which they fight ſo much againſt. They confeſs indeed, that the inſtance of *Meats*, Rom. 14. *is an Inſtance of Weakneſs*; but they urge, that the Apoſtle's Advice was, that thoſe *weak ones*, notwithſtanding their weakneſs, *ſhould be received*.

Rep. We agree with the Apoſtle's Advice, and have teſtified our Conſent thereto by our Practice: For ſo long as the Adverſaries kept within the bounds of weakneſs only, alleadging want of ſight, their weakneſs was born with, and they were received by Friends, in hopes that, if they waited humbly and honeſtly upon the Lord, he would open their underſtandings, and give them a ſight, and ſatisfaction concerning the things they then doubted about. But when, not content with this bearing and forbearing, they grew *heady and quarrelſome*, and ſought, by running into jangling diſputations, to ſtagger others, and ſpread the Leaven of their own doubts, that by making others as doubtful as themſelves, they might raiſe a party, to carry on ſtrife and contention by; they then put themſelves out of the Protection of the Apoſtle's Adviſe. For as he adviſed, *to receive him that is weak in the Faith*; ſo he alſo cautioned *not to receive him to doubtful Diſputations*. He was to be received, if he would be *quiet*, and his *weakneſs* to be born with; but not if he would be alwayes *wrangling*, and raiſing *Diſſentions* in the Church. So far as the

caſe

caſes will admit Compariſon, the Adverſaries Repreſentative was that *weak one*, who could not eat what his Brethren could. *He*, through *weakneſs*, could *not eat*: *They*, through *weakneſs* (of ſight) could *not ſee* what their Brethren ſaw, could not Act as their Brethren did; at leaſt pretended ſo. Now, as the Apoſtle gave a cautionary **Let not**, to him that was ſtrong; *Let not him that eateth diſpiſe him that eateth not*, Rom. 14. 3. (which Friends obſerved towards the Adverſaries, not deſpiſing nor rejecting them for their apparent weakneſs, but bearing with them, and carrying themſelves tenderly towards them: So he gave another cautionary **Let not**, to him that was weak (by whom, as I noted, the Adverſaries are here repreſented) *Let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth.* Had the Adverſaries obſerved this Caution of the Apoſtle, and not *judged their Brethren* in and for thoſe things, which their Brethren ſaw to be their Duty, and were ſatisfied and conſcientiouſly concerned in (and which themſelves acknowledged they had not a clear ſight of) the Difference in probability had not come to what it now is. But the Adverſaries forgeting the Apoſtles Counſel, fell to judge their Brethren, and that in the moſt provoking and reflecting manner, under the names of *Apoſtates*, *Innovators*, *Idolaters*, *Setters up of lordly Dominion*, *Uſurpers of Authority over Conſcience*, *Introducers of Popery*, &c. and that in Print; And never gave over, till they run themſelves by open war, into that open Separation, in which they now ſtand.

In their 35th page, they fall again upon their old odd Notion of making *Circumſtantial* and *Shadowy* to ſignifie the ſame thing.

Rep. Herein they err, for want of conſidering the proper nature of each. Every Shadow is a Repreſentation of ſome particular Subſtance, which it is a ſhadow of. But every Circumſtance is not Repreſentative. There are Circumſtances of Time, Place, Geſture, *&c.* belonging to every Action: yet is not every ſuch Circumſtance a Repreſentation of ſome particular Subſtance. Therefore every Circumſtance is not a Shadow. In meeting together to worſhip God, there muſt be a time to meet at, a Place to meet in. Theſe are Circumſtantial to the worſhip for which the Meeting is, but they are not Shadows. If the Adverſaries think they are, pray let them aſſign the particular Subſtances of which they are Shadows, and which, as Shadows, they repreſent. But for ought I ſee, they make all things to be Shadows, but the Spirit of God. For they

ſay,

say, they must be Substance or Shadow; and they admit nothing to be Substance, but that which leads into all Truth; and they add, *The Substance is God's holy Spirit, that only and alone guides into all Truth.* So that, after their *Shadowy* way of Reasoning, the Gospel Dispensation should be as Shadowy as the Legal was, or else there must be no external Appearance of Worship under the Gospel. And yet they acknowledge, *There should be no Shadows in Christ's Government.* But, if there should be no Shadows in Christ's Government, and all External Acts of Worship (according to their notion) are but Shadowy; then there must be no external Appearance, or Acts of Worship under Christ's Government. And what then would this shadowy, shady, dark Reasoning of theirs bring things to! I wish the more single-hearted of their beguiled Proselites would well observe this, and consider what Shadows of *Christians* they have made, or would make them.

In like manner, they blunder about the *Circumstantial* and *Essential*, puzzling themselves, and their Reader, to no purpose, for want of applying the words *Circumstantial* and *Essential* to their respective and proper *Relatives*: for they must relate to something that which is but Circumstantial to one thing, may be Essential to another. Outward Motion, or motion of the outward Members, is *Circumstantial* to man; *not Essential* to his being: for a man may be a man without outward motion. But this outward motion, though it be not Essential to man's Being, yet it is Essential to his Walking, Talking, Eating, &c. For walking, talking, eating, cannot be without some outward motion of the outward Members. As it is thus in Natural, so in Religious Matters. Outward Performances are but Circumstantial, not Essential to Religion, simply considered as in it self, and strictly taken in the abstract. But those very Performances, which are not Essential to Religion it self, in that strict sense, may be Essential to the Outward Profession and external Exercise of Religion. And indeed, no outward Profession of Religion can be made, no external Exercise of Religion performed, without the Circumstance of some outward Act or Medium. Which shews that outward Performances, outward Acts or Mediums are Essential to the Being of outward Profession, or Exercise of Religion, though not to Religion it self, in that strict and abstractive sense before-mentioned. I write this (not with respect to any particular

ticular Medium, Act, or Performance, but) in a general way, with respect to every Outward Performance, that relates to the right Exercise of true Religion; And to check the too confident Conclusion, which the Adversaries over-hastily draw, that whatsoever is not Essential to Religion (according to their undistinguished sense of Essentials) is, without more ado, a meer Shadow.

The Author of the Book they pretend to Answer, in his 9th page thereof, having shew'd that the Plea which the Adversaries make, viz. [*I must mind the Spirit of God in my self*] though true in it self, yet ought not *to be so applied, as to disregard the Preaching or Writings of Christ's enlightned Servants, because by them applied properly to the Preaching or Writing of false Prophets and Seducers*, concluded thus, *I say the Doctrine is true, but not exclusively of all external Counsel or direction; therefore false in application, where men are allowed to have had the fear of God, and the mind of his Spirit, and are not proved to have acted in their own Wills and Wisdom, or without the Guidance of the Spirit of God, about the things of his Church and Kingdom.* Here the Adversaries open wide, and a grevious Out-cry they make, p. 27. &c. Two main Exceptions they take against this. One at the words [*have had* the fear of God] and the other at the words [*are not proved* to have acted, &c.] Against the first, they alledge that *such as may have had the fear of God, may now be without it.* And, to give a *flurt* at the Author, they add, *As well as himself, who used to have good Arguments, but now wants them.* Against the second, they urge, that since *every fact must be committed before proved, they may have acted in their own will, and not yet fully proved.* Now, that this is a meer empty Cavil, and carping at words only, will appear by the Author's own words, in the place fore-cited, where he expresly calls the Persons he spake of, *Faithful Brethren*, and *Christ's enlightned Servants.* So that it is evident, he used that other way of Speech afterwards upon the Adversaries Concession, and to bind them the faster, who, how meanly soever they thought of Friends then, allowed them to *have had* the fear of God, and the mind of his Spirit, &c. and *had not proved* them to have acted in their own wills, how much soever they slighted them.

And it appears the Adversaries understood this to be so worded upon their Concession: for they say, p. 38. *If we have allowed any to have had the fear of God, and mind of his Spirit in things offered to us,*

if

if that allowance was true (observe) it was because we had a divine sense, relish and taste of it in our own Hearts.

Rep. If that allowance was true! it seems then they cannot tell, they have no assurance, whether that allowance was true, or no. How know they then whether the sense, relish, and taste of it, which they say they had in their hearts, was Divine, or no? For since they say that allowance was because they had a divine sense of it, &c. if the allowance was not true, the sense, which was the Cause of that allowance, will not appear to have been Divine.

They add, *And are we to go any further for a Proof, that such are wrong, than when the same Evidence comes not along with them?*

Rep. Yes sure, they especially, who have so little certainty whether the allowance they gave before was true; whether the sense in their own hearts, on which that allowance was grounded, was Divine, had need go further for a proof that others are wrong, than their own apprehension that the same Evidence comes not along with them. For how know they, but the same Evidence may come along with them, whom they judge wrong, though it cannot get entrance into their hearts, which are prepossessed with ill will, prejudice and Envy? Was it not so with some of old, who received, owned, embraced and allowed the Apostle *Paul* as right, and yet afterward turned against him as wrong? Where was the fault? Did not the same Evidence come along with the Apostle, and attend his Ministry, as before? Or was there no room in their prejudiced mind for the Evidence to enter? Should not they have gone further then, for a proof that he was wrong, than their sense that the same Evidence came not along with him?

But they say, *Can any indifferent man think that all this Smoke can be without Fire? What, one part all right, and t'other all wrong; let them think so that can, we cannot.*

Rep. No, no: All this Smoke is not without Fire; and that they know full well: for *they kindled the Fire.* But much of this Smoke *is the Smoke of their Torment*, who have *no rest* day nor night; but are *fretting* and *fuming*, making a *Pother* and *Smother*, and sending forth one *Pamphlet* after another, stuft with *Falsehoods* and *Reproaches*, to *keep the Fire burning*, and the *Smoke ascending*, that if possibly they may *darken the sight* of some or other, and by that means draw them to their party. Their *uneasiness* is apparent. Their *Separation* has not answered

anſwered their *Expectation*. They thought to have drove all before them, and with one ſweep of their Leader's Tail, *to have drawn*, at leaſt, *the third part of the Stars from Heaven*. But the Lord hath diſappointed them, bleſſed be his holy Name. So that though here and there *a wandring Star* hath fallen in with them; yet *the Stars of the Morning ſing together*, and *the Sons of God ſhout for joy*, feeling their Eſtabliſhment in the heavenly Power, and their Root in him that lives for ever. From this diſappointment of the Adverſaries Expectations, and the unſuccesfulneſs of their Separation to the end they propoſed, I take it to be, that they ſtill hover at the Meetings of Friends, to tinck off (if they can) unſenſible and unwary Ones, and gain ſome addition to their ſeparate Party.

When they ſay, *We cannot think one part all right, and t'other all wrong*, they ſeem to acknowledge that *themſelves are not right*. But if they are really ſenſible that *they are not right*, why do they not own wherein *they are wrong*, and condemn themſelves therein, that (Repenting) they may come to be right? If they can't think *the other Part all wrong*; why did they ſo revile and reproach them, and that publickly in Print, as *Apoſtates*, *Innovators*, *Idolaters*, *ſetters up of Idols and Images*, *Introducers of Popery*, and the like? And why did they divide and ſeparate from them.

Their 38th page gives a Quotation, pickt out of the 11th and 12th pages of the Book they pretend to Anſwer, and ſerves them to Cavil at to the end of their Pamphlet, which is half a dozen Leaves, or more. But becauſe their Anſwer thereto is not ſo much Argumentative as a *Declamatory Harangue*, and the matter thereof, for the moſt part, a Repetition of what they have ſaid, and I replied to, before; interlarded thick with the old Terms [*Impoſition*, *Circumſtantial*, *Ceremonial*, *Shadowy*, *bringing in New things*, *forcing new things*, &c.] I ſhall not think my ſelf obliged to imitate their Prolixity, by following them ſtep by ſtep, over each particular again; but touching on ſome Paſſages in the way, draw this Diſcourſe towards a Concluſion.

Firſt, As to the Quotaion they give, they give it not fairly: for connecting many Particulars together, they take liberty to leave out what they pleaſe. They begin it thus; *He ſaith*, *The Enemy is at work to ſcatter the minds of Friends*, *by thoſe looſe Pleas*, *as leave me to my Freedom*, *and to the Grace of God in my ſelf*, &c.

Rep. Here they leave out the first part of that Plea, which the Author there impleads, and which proves the loose mind of them that so make it. For the Author's words lie thus, The Enemy is at work to scatter the minds of Friends, by that loose Plea, *What hast thou to do with me? Leave me*, &c. This shews that that End of making this Plea, which the Author there taxes as *loose*, was to unbody, to disjoint, dismember, dissociate, disunite Friends, so as that one should have nothing to do with another, even in those things wherein the Testimony of Truth, common to all that profess Truth lies, as will appear by the following Lines. They go on with their Quotation thus, *The plain Consequence is to go from antient Principles and Practices, as there set down.* This they say, *He saith*, and they set this down in manner and Character with the rest of the Quotation, just as if he had said it indeed; whereas his own words are thus,—" This Proposition and Expression (namely, What hast thou " to do with me, *&c.*) as now understood and alleadged, is a " Deviation from, and a Perversion of the antient Principle of " Truth; for this is the plain consequence of this Plea, if any one " (especially if they are but lately convinced) shall say, I see " no Evil in paying Tithes to the Hireling-Priest, *&c.* I see no " Evil in Marrying by the Priest, *&c.* I see no Evil in declining a publick Testimony in suffering Times, or hiding in times " of Persecution, *&c.* I see no Evil in worshipping and respecting the persons of Men, *&c.* I see no Evil in keeping my Shop " shut upon the World's Holy-days and Mass-days, as they call " them, *&c.* All this (and more) they omitted. When as these are Instances of the looseness of the Plea; and which the Adversaries knew to be too true to be denied, and therefore chose rather to conceal, than revive by bringing them forth. Nay, the Author there shewed the Consequence of this Plea extended further, that he who should plead it in the Cases before instanced, might go on to say to Friends, " Since your Testimony is against Imposition, " and for leaving every one to the measure of the Grace which God " hath given him, not only, no Man hath power to reprove or " judge me, but I may be as good a Friend as any of you, according to my measure. This also they left out. And then, having pieced up the rest of the Quotation as they pleased, they give no direct Answer to it. They neither grant that the things there instanced are Evil, as paying Ththes, Marrying by the Priest, hiding,

ding in times of Perſecution, *&c.* (Leſt perhaps they ſhould ſtumble thoſe of their Party who expect that Liberty.) Nor do they deny that thoſe, and ſuch like, things have been, or may be, defended, by ſome under that Plea, What haſt thou to do with me? Leave me to my Freedom, *&c.* But inſtead of this, they begin their long Anſwer thus, *The ground of this great Noiſe and Clamour, was not agoing from antient Principles or Practices, but your bringing in new things*, &c.

Rep. They ſay not right. The ground of this great Noiſe and Clamour was, their going from the antient Fundamental Principle of all true Principles and Practiſes, the Light. They went from the Light of Chriſt in themſelves, and ſo became Darkned: Then complained they wanted ſight, they could not ſee the Service propoſed in the things recommended. But as little ſight as they had, they could ſee to oppoſe and obſtruct their Brethren, and not ſuffer them quietly to proceed in that, which they ſaw and were ſatisfied was their Duty. They could ſee to wrangle, jangle, cavil, contend and diſturb their Brethren with ungodly Speeches, and very unruly and turbulent Behaviour, whereby they raiſed a great Noiſe and Clamour.

They ſay, they *ought to be left to the Grace of God in this matter.*

Rep. To the Grace of God they were left in this, and every matter. But their ungodly Speeches, and unchriſtian Carriage, ſhewed, though they were left to the Grace of God, they were not led by it.

They ſay in *page* 39. *If nothing that is ſimply Evil or immoral can be charged upon your Brethren, will you to make way for Lordſhip and Dominion over your Brethren, joyn with the Prophane and Profeſſors againſt them and Truth.*

Rep. No: But the Adverſaries, by their own practice, confirming the charge of Profeſſors and Profane againſt the Light, have thereby joyned with both againſt Friends and Truth. And their ſaying here, If nothing that is *ſimply Evil or Immoral* can be charged upon your Brethren, *&c.* Shews how eaſy and willing they are to admit this *Plea* [of being left to their Freedom, *&c.*] For a defence or Cover for thoſe, or the like Evils before inſtanced, as *paying the Prieſt Tithes, Marrying by a Prieſt, &c.* Which though not ſuch things as in the Eye of the World are accounted *ſimply Evil*

or Immoral, are in the Eye of Truth certainly Evil, and inconsistent with our principle.

Again, they say, *If you deny that you impose, why are not you quiet?*

Rep. Friends are quiet. But the Adversaries are not, will not be quiet; but in a restless, tossed, turbulent mind and Spirit, are continually *devising deceitful matters against them that are quiet in the Land.* They could not be quiet till they were separated; they will not be quiet now they are separated: but ever and anon some or other of them come to Friends Meetings, to disquiet Friends there. And not satisfied with that neither, they scatter abroad their dirty Books, stuft with evil Surmises, sly Insinuations, envious Reflections, and foul Falsehoods; like those of Old, whom the Prophet compared to the *troubled Sea*, when it cannot rest, whose Waters *cast up Mire and Dirt*, Isa. 27. 20. *to whom there is no peace*, ver. 21. Therefore 'tis no wonder they are not quiet, but as *raging Waves of the Sea*, are ever and anon *foaming out their own shame*, like those whom *Jude* complained of, *vers.* 13. Nay, so averse are they to Quietness, that rather than want pretence for Strife, they have pickt up a Book that was written some Nine or Ten years ago, to make an occasion for a new Quarrel, or to revive the Old.

They say, *page* 4, You must bring those things in, about which the Difference is, either as Terms of Communion, or not. (It seems, as often as they have charged us with bringing those things in as Terms of Communion, they do not yet know whether we have done so, or not.) *If*, say they, *you did not bring them in as Terms of Communion, then why do you criminate your Brethren as evil Doers, whilst you have nothing against them, but refusing Compliance with your Opinions.*

Rep. Not to enumerate all we have against them, (who, in a subdolous way, still call themselves our Brethren, though they are gone from the true Brotherhood, that under that Name they might do us the greater mischief,) we have more against them, than their refusing Compliance with what they scornfully call our Opinions; namely, the *Troubles* and *Disturbances* they have raised in the Church, by their unruly, violent and turbulent Oppositions; the *Dissention* and *Divisions* they have caused thereby; the *Rent* and *Breach* they have made; the *open War* they have begun, and carried on;

on; the *Separation* they have run into; the wicked, envious *Books* they have Printed, to expose them they hipocritically call their Brethren, and, together with them, the Truth they profess, to the Scorn Contempt and Rage of the wicked; in all which they are *Evil-Doers*. And so they also are in suggesting, that Friends brought in those things, about which (they say) the Difference is, as Terms of Communion. For that is false. We brought not in any things as Terms of Communion. The holy God, who is the Author of our Communion with himself, and with one another, hath appointed and fixed the Terms of this Communion, *viz.* Walking in the Light, as he is in the Light, 1 *John* 1. 7. But I would gladly see what the Adversaries will assign for the Terms of their Communion: for where I have had any opportunity of observing them, or understanding their ways, I could never yet find or learn, that they excluded any from Communion with them, who would go to their separate Meetings, and rail against Friends. Sure I am, whoever shall observe, with an indifferent Eye, what they lick up, and whom they give the hand of Fellowship to, will find no cause to suppose the Terms of their Communion to be, walking in the Light.

They say, *We are sure it is more according to Truth, for you to omit the doing of what you may believe is good in this Sense, than for others to receive what they believe is wrong.* And this they speak, in order (as they pretend) *to discontinue the Difference.*

Rep. They state not the Case fairly on either hand: for what they would have us omit, they call only what *we may believe is good*; whereas they are not ignorant, that we have declared we believe those things to be, not only good, but required by God of us as our Duty. On the other hand, when they speak of others not receiving them, they call it what *they believe is wrong*; whereas they have not adventured to charge those things with being positively wrong, but have alleadged, they did not see the Service of them; or, as some of their Party have elsewhere stated it, they had *great cause to be jealous*, several things proposed were not from Heaven, but of Man: for in their Birth into the Church, they *seemed* not to bear the heavenly Image. There is some odds, surely, between *Belief* and *Jealousy*, between Believing a thing to be wrong, and having a *jealousy* that it was not from Heaven, but of Man; especially when

when that Jealousy hath no greater ground than a *seeming* not to bear the heavenly Image. Thus they craftily *extenuate* on the one hand, and aggravate on the other. But when each comes to be rightly stated, and set on its true bottom, it will appear to be no more according to Truth, for Friends to omit the doing of that which they believe to be (not only good, but) their required Duty; than for the Adversaries to receive what they did not see the Service of, but were *jealous* was of Man, because it *seemed* not to bear the heavenly Image. However, sure I am, it had been more according to Truth, for the Adversaries to have been Quiet, and not run headily against what, through *want of sight* and true Sense, they were *jealous* of; than either for them to have made the Opposition, Disturbance, Division and Separation they have made. Or for Friends to have omitted the doing that good, which they believed the Lord required of them, and felt him by his Spirit leading them into, and by his good presence owning them in. And indeed, a readier way could hardly be proposed, for *obstructing all Duty* in any Society, than to injoyn those, who believe it to be their Duty, to omit the doing of it, because others are jealous of it. However, their here proposing that Friends should omit the doing of what they believe is good, *&c.* as a way or means to discontinue the Difference, shews that (notwithstanding their loud Clamours, and reiterated Outcries against Friends for *Imposition, Imposition, Imposition:*) it was not Friends imposing upon them, that gave the occasion of the Difference: but it was Friends *refusing to be imposed upon by them*, to omit the doing of their believed Duty, and to be driven, by their impetuous Opposition, out of the practice of those things, which they believed were required of them. It was not enough to the Adversaries, not to be imposed on themselves: but they must have us omit the doing of what we believed to be good, and our Duty to do. Was not this Imposition on their parts, who so often cry out of being imposed upon!

What they say in their 41 *page*, with Allusion to the building of *Babel* of Old, and Confusion of Tongues that ensued thereupon, needs no more, in this place, than their own Application there of to themselves: for they deliver it in the first Person Plural [*WE.*] *Was not* WE *of one Language* (say they) *whilst* WE *truly*

truly travelled, &c. *But when* We *found* Shinar *a Plain, and took up* Our *dwelling there in the likeneſs of Truth, then did not* We, *as others before* Us, begin to build, *&c.* Now this they appropriate to themſelves by the Advertiſement they have given at the end of their Preface to the Reader, where, after they have ſaid, *Where the Term* You *is found in the following Diſcourſe, we intend the Author and thoſe of his mind*; they add, *And as the Term* We *is alſo uſed, it may be underſtood in reſpect to thoſe of the ſame mind with the Author of this* (that is, their) *Book.* Let them take it therefore to themſelves, to whom (if to any) it of right belongs. For they have been long hunting for a Plain (a place of more Room, Scope, and *Liberty*; finding Truth's way *too ſtrait and narrow for them*) and at length have found one, where they have taken up their Dwelling, in but the likeneſs of Truth, if in that. They have built up a *Separation*, which they deſigned for a *lofty Tower*, to preſerve them from what they were in no danger of, *Impoſition* from thoſe they call their Brethren. How they have ſped in their undertaking, may in ſome meaſure be gathered by this, that ſome of their Fellow-Builders in that work, have ſince ſubmitted to the Miniſtry of the Pariſh-Prieſts (to go no further.) So that, as thoſe *Babel* Builders of old met with that they ſhunn'd, *viz.* to be *ſcattered abroad*, *&c. Gen.* 11. 4, 8. So theſe, to avoid an imagined Danger, of Impoſition from their Brethren, have betook themſelves to the Pariſh Prieſts, where *Impoſition is avowed.* How far they are divided in Language, while ſome are mumbling their Mattins in the old Maſs-Houſes, I leave themſelves to conſider. But that they do agree, and are one in Spirit (as well ſuch of them as are already gone off to the Prieſt, as ſuch as are not yet,) to write againſt the Innocent, to Reproach, Revile, Raile at, Slander, and wickedly bely Friends, a late ſcurrilous Book of *Francis Bugg*'s, and another of *John Pennyman*'s, compared with others written by other of the Adverſaries, plainly ſhew. Which Books came out ſo near in time with that I am now Replying to, as if there had been an Intelligence held, and Correſpondence carried on, between the reſpective Authors.

They ſay, *page* 41, *For you to call ſuch Pleas as thoſe, Leave me to the Grace of God, and to the Spirit of Truth, looſe Pleas*, &c. *We look upon it as of dangerous Conſequence; what though ſome may abuſe them, will you take them away, and with them freedom of Speech?*

Rep.

Rep. We do not call thoſe Pleas looſe, with reſpect to the Pleas themſelves (which we acknowledge are ſound and good:) but with reſpect to the Spirit by which, and the end to which, thoſe Pleas have been pleaded by the Adverſaries; which was by a looſe Spirit, in order to let up Looſeneſs *without controul.* Therefore we take not away the Pleas, but the *abuſe* of them. Nor do we take away freedom of Speech; but in Truth's Authority reprove that exorbitant Liberty of Rayling at, Reviling and Reproaching Friends, and expoſing Truth to the Worlds contempt and ſcorn, under pretence of freedom of Speech.

In *page* 42, they ask, *Why may not you be cautioned to beware of Formality?*

Rep. We are often cautioned ſo; as they that frequent our Meetings know. And when that Caution is given in the love of God, it is in the ſame love received. But when, under pretence of Cautioning againſt Formality, ſome (not diſtinguiſhing between *Formality* and *Form*) endeavour to overturn, ſubvert and take away all Form and Order from the Church of Chriſt, we cannot receive, but reject, ſuch Cautions and Cautioners, as knowing that they come not from, nor ſerve the God of Order; but that Spirit which would bring all into diſorder and Confuſion.

In *page* 43, they ſay, *Pray let us know why Truth's Teſtimonies may not be allowed and paſs current, where the Life and Converſation is ſuitable.*

Rep. Truths Teſtimonies are allowed, and do paſs currant among Truth's Followers. But the Adverſaries ſhould have explained what they mean by Truth's Teſtimonies. For thoſe Doctrinal Principles, delivered of old by Truth himſelf, and afterwards by his inſpired Followers, and Recorded in the Scriptures of Truth, are Truth's Teſtimonies, eſpecially as they are taken up and uſed by the ſame Spirit that gave them forth. And the Teſtimonies that proceed from the Spirit of Truth, ſpeaking through any of his Servants in our Meetings, or elſewhere, at this day, are the Teſtimonies of Truth alſo. And all theſe are allowed, and paſs currant amongſt Friends. But if the Adverſaries mean, by Truth's Teſtimonies, their own Teſtimonies, thoſe Teſtimonies that they bring, and *thruſt upon Friends* in our Meetings, and ask why thoſe Teſtimonies may not be allowed and paſs currant; the Anſwer is, becauſe

becauſe thoſe Teſtimonies are not Truth's Teſtimonies, (how like ſoever they may ſeem to be,) neither come they in Truth's way. They proceed not from the Spirit of Truth, but from that Spirit that Fights againſt Truth; a Spirit of Diſſention, Diviſion, Diſunion and Separation from Friends in Truth.

In *page* 45. they ſay, *Might not a little Charity help all this, could you look upon ſuch as trouble you to be Conſcientious.* Again, *Certainly you cannot think that all is wrong that are diſſatisfied*, &c. *We would perſwade you better, by aſſuring, that ſome are right by being ſincere.*

Rep. They who have known theſe *Troubles* throughly, and have ſeen and obſerved their manner of *Troubling*, and in what Spirit they have done it, had need have more than *a little* Charity, to make them look on ſuch to be Conſcientious. Was their publiſhing Friends in Print to be Apoſtates, Innovators, Setters up of Images, Introducers of Popery, Idolaters, *&c.* An Argument that they were Conſcientious? Was their expoſing Truth and Friends, by their printed Pamphlets, to the Scorn, Contempt and Deriſion of the Wicked, and rendring them (as much as in them lay) obnoxious to the Government, a token of their being Conſcientious? Was their ſhutting Friends out of their Meting-Houſes, wherein they had a rightful Intereſt and Propriety, expoſing antient and tender Bodies, and ſome their neareſt Relations, to all Extremities of Weather, and that for divers years together (as at *Reding*, and elſewhere) an Effect of their being Conſcientious? *O barbarous Conſciences! O conſcientious Barbariſm!* where ſhall a Parallel to this be found, unleſs in that which Chriſt foretold his Diſciples, *John* 16. 2. *They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues:* yea, *the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God Service.* How far theſe *conſcientious Troublers* have anſwered this Prophecy, let themſelves and others conſider. Nay, have they not been worſe than thoſe foreſpoken of by Chriſt? For they were open Enemies; theſe *feigned* Friends and *falſe* Brethren. Now whereas they ſay, *Certainly you can not think that all is wrong that are diſſatisfied with thoſe new things brought in, at leaſt, as made Terms of Communion.*

I Reply, We do not think all that are ſo diſſatisfied *equally wrong*: for we are ſenſible thoſe *Troublers* have, by ſlanderous Suggeſtions and falſe Inſinuations, beguiled and betrayed ſome; whoſe Reco-

very out of the Snare, in which thoſe *Troublers* have taken them, we earneſtly deſire and travel for. But though we do not think all *alike* wrong; yet we do think and know that *all* who think new things are brought in and made Terms of Cummunion with Friends, are *wrong in thinking ſo*, whatever they are otherwiſe.

And whereas they ſay, *They would perſwade us better, by aſſuring that ſome are right by being ſincere.*

I *Reply*; If they are, they muſt not be any of thoſe *Troublers*, who notwithſtanding they have ſeparate Meetings of their own, to which they have *withdrawn*, and *choſen to meet apart* (as ſome of themſelves have elſewhere expreſt it) do yet frequently *thruſt in* at ſome of our Meetings, and *impoſe themſelves* upon Friends for Preachers, as if they did it on purpoſe to diſturb, and to make trouble in our Meetings. Can any thing be more contrary to Sincerity than this! Is not this an extream degree of Hypocriſie! Let the *Troublers* therefore give over their *Hypocriſie*, and make it appear that they themſelves are ſincere to what they themſelves have choſen, and ſet up, before they take upon them to give aſſurance of the ſincerity of others.

They bid us *Remember, They obtrude nothing upon you.*

Rep. That's falſe. Thoſe *Troublers* obtrude themſelves, their Preaching, and their Praying, upon Friends (which they know, (having been often told) Friends cannot receive:) than which, what worſe they could obtrude, I know not. And where they have had ſtrength by numbers, they have *obtruded* theſe upon Friends, under the Penalty of being deprived of their Meeting-Houſe, if they would not conform to this Impoſition. And becauſe Friends could not conform thereunto, thoſe *Troublers* have actually ſhut Friends out of their Meeting-Houſes, and do yet continue to keep them out; thereby depriving Friends of their juſt Right. Therefore when any of thoſe *Troublers* ſhall again come to *obtrude themſelves* upon Friends in our Meetings, *Let them Remember this.*

Again, they ſay, *The Lord often ſpared thoſe that are wrong, for the ſakes of thoſe that are right.*

Rep. We know he hath done ſo, and we deſire he may do ſo ſtill: but we leave that to him; who beſt knows to whom, and how long, to extend that forbearance. But let not the Adverſaries abuſe God's merciful forbearance, by *continuing in the wrong*, after that the Lord hath made themſelves ſible that *they are wrong*.

They

They add, *And 'tis our Doctrine, Tares ſhould be ſuffered to grow, rather than deſtroy Wheat.*

Rep. And 'tis Chriſt's Doctrine, and his own Expoſition of his *Parable* of the *Tares*, that the *Field*, in which they ſhould be ſuffered to grow, is the *World*, Mat. 13. 38. This is a good Argument againſt Perſecution, or *outward Violence*, for Religion's ſake. Men ought not to be killed, deſtroyed, pluckt up, and *rooted out of the World*, only becauſe they are *Tares*, or *a wrong Seed* of the Enemies ſowing. But I wiſh the Adverſaries would ſpeak plainly, whether it be their Doctrine that ſuch Tares, called by Chriſt, *The Children of the wicked One*, ſhould be ſuffered to grow in the Church, the Garden of God, after they are diſcovered, diſcerned, plainly perceived, and certainly known (as the Tares in the Parable at the firſt ſight were) to be Tares. Ah, how would this looſe Spirit, that is got up in ſome, turn Spiritual *Zion*, the *incloſed Garden* of God, into a *Plowed Field*! However, it is to be hoped, *Their applying the Parable of Tares to themſelves*, may help to make ſome others underſtand them better, than hither to they have done. And their pleading for a Toleration for Tares to grow in the Church (for of the Church, and its Members, they here treat; not of the World:) may give ſome a further ſight of *their Deſign* for *ſheltring Evil*, and what they aim at in this Plea, than ever they had before.

After they have ſhewed the utmoſt of Immoderation in managing the Difference on their own part, they now at length begin to preach Moderation to Others.

If, ſay they, *this Difference cannot be ended,* ——*manage it with more Moderation* (they might have added, than themſelves have done) *and in that love of God, that it may be ſhewed the Lord is at hand, to gather different apprehenſions into a better Temper.* (They might have added, than Themſelves have hitherto been in.)

Rep. But why did they not think of this *Moderation*, before they publiſhed their many *ſcandalous* and *malicious* Books, to the *defaming* of Truth and Friends to the world, as much as in them lay? Why did they not preach this *Moderation* to their own Party at *Reading*, and other Places, to have gathered them into a *better temper* (for *a worſe* they could hardly have been in) than to keep Friends out of their Meeting-Houſes, wherein they had a juſt and legal Property, and expoſe them, for divers Years together, to thoſe

hardſhips that *Heat* and *Cold*, *Rain* and *Storms* of Weather bring? They, who have done the greateſt miſchief by *their Immoderation* that they can, begin now to recommend Moderation to others. And they, who have done their utmoſt to *diſhonour the God of Truth and Peace, before the People*, by publiſhing their *wicked Books*, and ſetting up their *ſeparate Meetings*, do now take upon them to exhort Others to Moderation; *Otherwiſe*, ſay they, *you will diſhonour the God of Truth and Peace, before the People.* Is not this *Hyprocriſie in grain.*

They add, pag. 46. *You muſt agree together quietly, or part friendly, or you are no Preachers of Righteouſneſs, whatever your Principles of Truth may be.*

Rep. To what end do they propoſe this now, ſo long after they have actually *parted from us!* They have had their *ſeparate Meetings* theſe many years. And more than a year ago, ſome of them gave us to underſtand in Print, that they had *choſen to meet apart*, and had *withdrawn.* But ſince they did neither *agree quietly* with us while together, nor did *part Friendly* when they withdrew, does it not follow upon them, according to their own words, that *They are no Preachers of Righteouſneſs*, whatever Principles of Truth they may hold? They urge the Example of *Abraham* and *Lot*, for parting by agreement. But they do not take notice, that that was only a parting of outward *Habitations*, and that through Neceſſity, becauſe the place was not large enough to hold them. So that this was not a *Religious parting*, muchleſs a parting through *Oppoſition of their Spirits.* Yet this was in the *Uncircumciſed* ſtate too: for Circumciſion was not inſtituted till after this. But they would do well to conſider, that *Lot*, who *took his Choice*, and *parted* from *Abraham* the Friend of God, came to *great Loſs*, and *ſuffered deeply* thereby. For though, at firſt remove, he pitched his Tent but *towards Sodom*, *Gen.* 13. 12. yet quickly after we find him ſettled *in Sodom*, chap. 14. 12. And he had not long been there, before he was made *a Captive*, and was glad to be reſcued by him he had parted from. O that all, that are in danger of being beguiled, *betrayed* and led away by this *Dividing* Spirit and its Agents, would conſider theſe things in a Spiritual Application, and *beware of Separating from God's Friends*; leſt, by the pleaſantneſs of the Plains (where *liberty, freedom*, room and ſcope may be had, *to walk at will*) they be allured to pitch

pitch their Tents *towards* myſtical *Sodom*, and by degrees drawn *into it!*

It follows in their Book, *But why cannot you agree together, whilſt you own one and the ſame righteous Principle?*

Rep. By this it ſeems as if owning a Principle, were Terms of their Communion. To own the Principle of Truth, is one thing: to hold it, keep to it and obey it, is another. Many do the one, that do not the other. Many own the Principle of Truth in words, that never came into Obedience to it: and ſome that have departed from obedience to the Principle, have yet retained a verbal Acknowledgement of it. And of them that have made Profeſſion of the Truth, and afterwards turned their Backs upon it, how few are there that do not own the Principle! They find fault with ſomething or other in the Society, to make themſelves an Out-let, that they may thereby ſlip out, and ſhake off the *Yoke* of Chriſt, which is as *uneaſie* to the *Wrong*, as *eaſie* to the *Right*. But they commonly cry up the Principle ſtill. Do not *Pennyman*, *Criſp* and *Bugg* own in words the ſame righteous Principle ſtill? Let me turn the Queſtion then upon the Adverſaries, and ask them, Why cannot you and thoſe men agree together, whilſt you and they own one and the ſame righteous Principle? Nay, why cannot you and they agree in other things, as well as in *contending againſt Truth*, and *writing Books againſt Friends*?

They add, *You came out together, have you not done the greater, and cannot you do the leſs? That's ſtrange.*

Rep. That's not ſo ſtrange, as they would make it. *Iſrael* of old came out of *Egypt* together (and with them a mixt multitude, *Exod.* 12. 38. or, as in the Margin, a great Mixture.) But all they that came out together, did not agree to travel on together. No, ſome *grumbled* and *murmured* at the *Hardſhips* in the way. Some *emulated* and *repined* at the *ſuperior Gifts and Graces of their Brethren.* Some let in, and cheriſhed *Evil Surmiſes*, and *falſe Jealouſies* concerning their Brethren, as if ſome of their Brethren *took too much upon them*, and *lifted themſelves up above the Congregation*, and ſought a Principality or Lordly Dominion over the reſt, *Numb.* 16. Thus wrought the ſubtil Enemy after divers manners, to divide, ſcatter and turn aſide, ſome after one manner, ſome after another. Some were *ſwallowed up of the Earth*, and periſhed in their *Gain-ſaying.*

Some

Some were for *making themſelves a Captain*, (in oppoſition to the Captain God had made,) and for *returning again into Egypt*, the Land of Darkneſs out of which they came up together. Others were conſumed by the *Fire* of the Lord, which in hot *Indignation* brake forth againſt them. And *all the Murmurers fell in the Wilderneſs*. Now *all theſe things* (as the Apoſtle ſays) *happned unto them for Examples: and they are written for our Admonition*, 1 Cor. 10. 11. Therefore *Murmur not ye, as ſome of them alſo Murmured, and were deſtroyed of the Deſtroyer*, ver. 10.

That which remains of the Adverſaries Book is moſtly a Recapitulation, or contracted Repetition of their foregoing Reaſonings, grounded upon a falſe Hypotheſis or Suppoſition, that Friends would impoſe new things, as matters of Faith and terms of Communion; and would bring in blind Obedience, by preſſing Conformity before Conviction, and the like: which, I hope, the Reader will find, to his Satisfaction, refuted before. That therefore I may not ſwell this Book with unneceſſary Repetitions, I will only recommend to the Reader's Obſervation, what, after all their Outcry againſt bringing in new things (as they call them) the Adverſaries themſelves grant, in *page* 48. in theſe words; *Any Particular, or any Aſſembly of the Community, may offer what is new, if they ſincerely believe it good and Serviceable, without breach of Unity, or at leaſt of Communion*; *but* (ſay they) *we cannot find to the bringing of new things in, as matters of Faith, or terms of Communion, that any Aſſembly have any more power than a particular Perſon.*

Rep, What Power an Aſſembly may have more than a particular Perſon, I liſt not here to diſpute, becauſe I would not (like them) *pick occaſion* of Debate and Quarrelling. But ſince Friends have not offered any of the things, the Adverſaries except againſt under the Notion of new things, as matters of Faith to others, or as terms of Communion; but have only offered ſuch things as they *ſincerely believe are good and Serviceable*: let it ſuffice, that Friends have herein done no more, than the Adverſaries here grant may be done, by any Particular, or any Aſſembly of the Community, without breach of Unity or Communion. The Breach therefore of Unity and Communion that now is betwixt them and Friends, muſt lie, and doth, at the Adverſaries Door, who (by the heady, willful, violent and turbulent Oppoſition they made, to obſtruct and hin-

der

der Friends from proceeding on, in the uſe and practice of thoſe things, which the Friends ſincerely believed, and do yet believe, to be *good* and *Serviceable*) have run themſelves into *open War*, and that in Print, againſt Friends, and into *open Diviſion* and *Separation* from Friends. So that it is *They have broken themſelves off* from the Unity, Communion and Society of Friends, both *inwardly* in Spirit, and *outwardly* alſo in Religious Exerciſes. The Lord (if it be his good pleaſure) give them yet a clear ſight, and true ſenſe of the great Evil, and Miſchief they have done againſt God, his Truth and People; that in the ſenſe thereof they may be truly humbled, and bowed down before him, and brought to ſuch an honeſt and ſenſible Acknowledgment thereof, as may evidence their ſincere Repentance, that, through Judgment, they may find Mercy, and obtain Remiſſion from him.

THE END.

Of the Miſtakes committed in Printing, the moſt material that have been yet obſerved, are here noted to be Corrected. Others of leſs moment, as miſ-ſpellings, miſ-placing of Letters, or Stops, the *Reader* is deſired to amend in reading.

PAge 10. line 21. read *is in.* pag. 20. line 8. r. *reprove.* l. 13. for *immoral*, r. *Evil* p. 22. l. 33. for *not yet*, r. *nor yet.* p. 23. l. 25. after *diſpenſation*, make *Comma.* p. 40. l. 13. f. *preſent*, r. *recent.* p. 44. l. 1. r. *John* 6. 56. p. 50. l. 27. r. *Peter.* p. 52. l. 9 f. *of Evil*, r. *for Evil.* p. 63. l. 12. f. *prevent*, r. *pervert.*